



Riverfront



Residential



Broad Street



**James Brown
Arena and Bell
Auditorium**



**Augusta Municipal
Building**

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

**Prepared By:
Augusta Planning and Development
Department**

Melanie Wilson, Director

Draft: September 01, 2016



(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Table of Contents

A Note to Readers	i
List of Acronyms.....	ii
Executive Summary.....	iii
Augusta's Downtown Redevelopment Area	iii
Socioeconomic Profile	iv
Market Analysis	iv
Implementation Strategies.....	iv
Implementation Tools	v
1 Introduction	1
2 Augusta's Downtown Redevelopment Area	1
2.1 Downtown Augusta - Current and Future Land Use	2
2.2 Socioeconomic Profile	3
2.2.1 Methodology	4
2.2.2 Socioeconomic Analysis.....	8
2.3 Historic Properties in Downtown	14
2.4 Description of the DRA	14
3 DRA Market Analysis	17
3.1 Methodology	17
3.2 Market Analysis Update	20
4 Designated Sites Qualify as DRA	25
4.1 Municipal Building - Project Update	26
4.2 Port Royal - Project Update	27
4.3 Depot Site - Project Update.....	27
4.3.1 Depot Station Renovation and Upgrade	28
5 Future Private Redevelopment Projects and Investment.....	28
5.1 Community Vision for the Augusta DRA	29
5.2 Recent Improvement Initiatives	29
6 Additional Improvement Initiatives	32
6.1 Augusta-Richmond County Target Area Master Plan	32
6.2 The Westobou Vision: Augusta/North Augusta 2009 Master Plan.....	33
6.3 Revitalizing the Garden City: Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda (ASDA) 2010	35

6.4	Walkability and Age-Friendly Streets: Opportunities to Transform Augusta's Built Environment	36
6.4.1	Age-Friendly Community - Active Living Workshop:	36
6.5	Augusta Regional Transportation Study Long Range Transportation Plan 2040	38
7	Zoning & Land Use Compatibility	39
7.1	Place Making	39
7.2	Parking	42
7.2.1	Downtown Parking Best Practices	43
7.2.2	Future of DRA Parking	44
7.2.3	A Downtown Circulator	45
7.3	Land Use Compatibility	46
7.4	Existing Zoning Districts and Overlays	46
7.5	Downtown Design Guidelines	47
7.6	Overlay District	50
7.7	The Levee	51
8	Future of DRA	52
	Appendix A. Maps	53
	Appendix B. Augusta Mayor and Commission	59
	Mayor Hardie Davis, Jr.	59
	Augusta-Richmond County Commission:	59
	Appendix C. References and Resources	60
	Appendix D. Tax Parcel ID Numbers	61
	Appendix E. Project Area Status	62

List of Figures

Figure 1: CBD and TAD 1 Boundary	4
Figure 2: DRA Boundary	7
Figure 3: Household Income Levels	9
Figure 4: Population by Age Profile	10
Figure 5: Occupied Housing Profile	10
Figure 6: Housing Value Profile	11
Figure 7: Education Profile	12
Figure 8: DRA Market Analysis	19
Figure 9: DRA Total Population	20

Figure 10: DRA Total Employment.....	21
Figure 11: DRA Occupancy and Property Value.....	22
Figure 12: DRA Income Levels.....	23
Figure 13: DRA Retail Sales	24
Figure 14: DRA Income Growth Rate	24
Figure 15: Target Area Master Plan Map.....	32
Figure 16: The Westobou Vision Map.....	33
Figure 17: DRA Boundaries	49
Figure 18: Riverwalk Downtown Augusta.....	51
Figure 19: Minimum Height and Setback	51

List of Tables

Table 1: Business Summary	4
Table 2: U.S. Census and American Community Survey	5
Table 3: Market Potential	5
Table 4: Retail Market Place	5
Table 5: Population and Housing Profile Summary	8
Table 6: Household Income Level Profile	8
Table 7: Race and Ethnicity Profile	9
Table 8: Housing Value Profile	11
Table 9: Employment Profile	12
Table 10: DRA Retail Sales Profile	13
Table 11: Retail Strategies Market Analysis.....	18
Table 12: DRA Available Properties	22
Table 13: SPLOST VII Project List.....	31
Table 14: Downtown Design Guidelines	47

A Note to Readers

Envision Augusta what our great city and its downtown can become. This review period is just the beginning of a process that is designed to establish a framework from which a unifying vision emerges to guide new growth and development for the downtown and the city of Augusta. The tools and initiatives mentioned are the results of work and aspirations of residents, business owners and city leadership that conceive this plan as possible. Public and partner participation, the next step in ultimately implementing ideas, planning and development concepts, are crucial to realizing a written plan that is reflective of all interested in a vibrant downtown that is lively and innovative in the way life and growth is planned and lived.

The geographic information system (GIS) maps, provided within this plan, are created as visual aids to spatially display local buildings and property to show plans of investment and the relationship to existing and future populations, jobs and regional economic growth. The maps are for illustrative purposes only and are subject to change.

This version of the plan is a draft technical report written to include market analysis, key findings, and recommendations that are to be the foundation for the Downtown Redevelopment Plan. Some parts of the document, such as the market analysis are subject to change due to regional economics.

Next Goals:

- Secure Public Participation
- Ratify Plan Update as Complete and Implementable
- Work with Public and Private Partners to Establish Development Benchmarks

So, allow this data and information to spark your creativity and thoughts of a downtown that captures your imagination and provides the structure for realizing a vibrant downtown for all of Augusta Richmond County and the surrounding region.

List of Acronyms

ASDA	Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda
CBD	Central Business District
TAD	Tax Allocation District
DRA	Downtown Redevelopment Area
SPI	Spending Potential Index

Executive Summary

Augusta's Downtown Redevelopment Area

In 2008, downtown Augusta was designated an Urban Redevelopment Area and Tax Allocation District (TAD) through the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Act (1955) and Georgia Urban Redevelopment Powers Act (1985). TAD is Georgia's version of Tax Increment Financing (TIF). This allows local government to capture tax revenues within a specific area and use those funds for improvement projects within that area. Numerous sites have been redeveloped through the program including the Municipal Building Complex, public library, 600 Broad Street, and the Port Royal site (initially considered). Other areas like the "Old Depot" site and Coliseum Complex are being renovated. Downtown Augusta is always growing, as this plan update demonstrates.

The plan was last updated in 2013 with the boundary being the Savannah River in the north, Gordon Highway and Fourth Street in the east, Walton Way and D'Antignac Street to the south, and Chafee Avenue to the west. The Augusta Commission, through The Westobou Vision: Augusta/North Augusta 2009 Master Plan, selected specific sites for redevelopment in Downtown Redevelopment Area (DRA). The plan update provides information on these sites, since the plan was last updated in 2013. Redevelopment details are presented in the plan and appendix. The sites and their improvements are included in *Table I*. A socioeconomic profile and market analysis is also provided in this plan update.

Table I: TAD Sites and Improvements

Site	Improvements
"Old Depot" site	Attract private investors to site, potential mixed use development, currently approved for temporary parking lot
Public Library	Being renovated for Augusta Judicial Circuit Public Defender Office
600 Broad Street	Renovated for incubator, Augusta Regional Collaboration Corporation, local artists and other tenants
Municipal Building Complex	Newly renovated housing most municipal departments, includes construction of new Information Technology Building
Port Royal Site	High rise condominium with retail and office spaces recently renovated for Unisys and other retail, medical, and restaurant opportunities
Coliseum Complex	Internal renovations done in 2012, additional improvements funded through SPLOST VII

Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

Since the plan's approval and subsequent updates, some sites have been redeveloped while others are being renovated.

- Completed: 600 Broad Street, Municipal Building Complex, and Port Royal Site
- In-Process: Coliseum Complex, "Old Depot" site, and Public Library

Downtown's social, economic and market conditions have changed since 2008. A ten-year socioeconomic analysis is done from 2010 to 2020, determining how the area has grown, and will

continue to do so. An independent market analysis, conducted by the Augusta Planning and Development Department, is used to evaluate the area's economic vitality. Geographic Information System, ESRI Community Analyst, and variety of data sources were used to analyze both the socioeconomic and market data.

Socioeconomic Profile

The socioeconomic analysis focuses on the DRA, based on the previous boundaries set in the 2013 Downtown Redevelopment Plan. It does not take into consideration adjacent areas in Augusta or North Augusta. Key DRA demographic, employment, household, property value and other socioeconomic findings include:

- 2020, Population is projected to remain constant at 2,584.
- 2010 – 2020, A 3% increase in renter occupancy and 15% decrease in owner occupancy.
- 2015 – 2020, A 9.7% increase in average household income based on 2015-dollar value.
- 2010 – 2020, A 6% increase in senior (55 and over) population.
- 2015, There are 671 total employees, primarily (65%) in retail, sales, and office services.
- 2015, Over 67% of population has high school diploma or higher education degrees.
- 2015 – 2020, Median property value estimated to increase 31.22%.

Market Analysis

The market analysis presents the area's economic strengths and weaknesses based on primary, secondary, and tertiary markets. The primary market is 1-square mile, typically considered as a local traveler market. Secondary market is 3-square miles and is described as a commute traveler market. Tertiary market is 6-square miles used for a regional traveler market. A detailed explanation of these market areas, the methodology, and findings are provided in the plan. DRA's secondary and tertiary markets involve portions of North Augusta, SC. Highlights include:

- 2015, Over 3,500 people employed in secondary market.
- 2015, Average home value over \$150,000 in primary and secondary markets.
- 2015, 76% renter occupied housing units vs 13% owner occupied in primary market.
- 2015 – 2020, A 10% estimated increase in average household income in primary market.
- 2015, Over \$45 million retail sales in primary market, \$180 million in secondary.
- 2015 – 2020, There is a 2.11% per capita annual growth rate in secondary market.

Implementation Strategies

A list of plans, projects, and programs have been implemented in downtown Augusta and are incorporated in this update. They include:

- The Westobou Vision: Augusta/North Augusta 2009 Master Plan
 - Convert west downtown into a Medical/Health Science District.
 - Convert central downtown into Marbury Village District.
 - Convert east downtown into Westobou Crossing & Higher/Education/Civic District.
- Revitalizing the Garden City: Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda 2010
 - Convert downtown into Market Creation areas.

- Completely implement the Westobou Master Plan.
- Walkability and Age – Friendly Streets: Opportunities to Transform Augusta’s Built Environment.
 - Conduct detail walking audit of all downtown streets.
- Augusta Regional Transportation Study (ARTS) Long Range Transportation Plan: Transportation Vision 2040.
 - Continue implementing transportation projects in downtown through Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
 - Continue implementing ARTS Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- Augusta Georgia Downtown Design Guidelines.
 - Continue protecting downtown’s history through Design Guidelines and Historic Preservation Commission.

Implementation Tools

There are zoning and land use compatibility measures that have been added to the plan. These measures address what makes a community a special place with Place Making, covering issues of parking, districts covering Land Use Compatibility, Existing Zoning Districts and Overlays, Downtown Design Guidelines, Overlay District, and the Levee. The Parking section has three subsections that elaborate on the following:

- Downtown Parking Best Practices
- Future of Downtown Redevelopment Area Parking
- A Downtown Circulator

Currently, only a small portion of downtown remains as a TAD. The DRA boundary is flexible and may change at the County’s discretion. The plan update provides a brief summary of these implementation tools to address the potential impact on the downtown. It also illustrates the levee and how developers can use it as an asset for future projects.

*Augusta possesses the will to make projects work.
- Augusta-Richmond County profile in Georgia Trend, August 2012*

1 Introduction

The Georgia state legislature amended the Urban Redevelopment Law (2015) and the Redevelopment Powers Law (2009). These laws contributed toward changes that affect the way local counties and jurisdictions redevelop specific areas within their boundaries.

A secondary purpose of an Urban Redevelopment Plan is allowing local jurisdictions to designate a Tax Allocation District (TAD) through the Redevelopment Powers Law (O.C.G.A. 36-44-1). This law has set procedures and a narrower focus than the Urban Redevelopment Law, including and not limited to:

- Tax revenues collected within a TAD are used specifically for the designated area.
- Termination or dissolution of a TAD occurs when redevelopment is completed.
- TAD in Georgia functions as Tax Increment Financing.

Augusta established both an Urban Redevelopment Plan and Tax Allocation District in 2008: The Laney Walker/Bethlehem Neighborhood and TAD 1. This Downtown Redevelopment Plan (DRP) Update builds upon the November 2013 plan approved by the Augusta-Richmond County Commission.

2 Augusta's Downtown Redevelopment Area

Downtown Augusta's mix of land uses reflects its history as an urban riverfront center, whose growth has fanned out to suburban and semi-rural areas. The area's land uses and this plan remain consistent with the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. These uses include residential neighborhoods of varying ages, a central business district, a concentration of public facilities and higher education institutions, commercial buildings in shopping centers and on individual sites, and industrial scattered sites. They are connected by the original street grid pattern established by the city's founder, James Oglethorpe. In many cases, residential, commercial and industrial uses are in close proximity to one another, reflecting development that was occupied prior to adopting a zoning ordinance.

As Augusta grew away from downtown during its rampant sprawl growth period, its population followed, leaving the central business district in distress. The consolidated Augusta-Richmond County government and key departments worked in concert with its citizens, business and civic association creating planning documents and executing strategic economic development incentives successfully reversing this disinvestment. All guided by Downtown's vision as set in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan.

Downtown Vision

Downtown Augusta will maintain and enhance its historic character and unique mix of land uses. Downtown will continue to reflect the predominant characteristics of a historic central business district, while at the same time adapting to the changing environment around it. Underutilized parcels will be redeveloped in a manner consistent with the overall vision for downtown and with respect for existing development patterns and the historic architecture in the area. Redevelopment will include new medium and high density housing, additional commercial and office development, new civic and institutional facilities and shopping and entertainment facilities. Adaptive reuse of historic buildings will be a key component. New development will respect the scale, massing, architecture and other design elements of the existing historic structures.

The Augusta-Richmond County government, dedicated housing and community nonprofits, and leading business groups like Augusta Tomorrow, recognize that Augusta's future redevelopment must link to its historic, architectural past with twenty-first century improvements in order to attract investment. To achieve this vision, the Augusta Commission designated six areas as important starting points to revitalizing downtown:

- Municipal Building complex
- 600 Broad Street
- "Old Depot" site
- Port Royal site
- Coliseum complex (James Brown Arena and Bell Auditorium)
- Former main library site

In support of this effort, according to the November, 2013 Augusta Downtown Urban Redevelopment Plan, the Augusta Commission proposed the creation of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan (the "Plan"), which included "two initial projects to begin implementation of the Plan: The Municipal Building Renovation Project and the Port Royal Commercial Renovation Project." In order to successfully complete these projects, a clear understanding of the areas current and future land uses, along with socioeconomic trends, were identified.

2.1 Downtown Augusta - Current and Future Land Use

Current and future redevelopment opportunities in downtown focus on a unique mix of uses. Redevelopment policies and investments emphasize the strengths and sustainable uses in the area. They include residential, commercial, entertainment, cultural and recreational development. Such mixed use supports economically vibrant live-work-play communities connected by improved roadways and waterways.

Improved road connections, sidewalks, bike paths and greenways better connect neighbors and businesses. This transforms a number of disconnected, difficult-to-access and underdeveloped land uses into attractive, economically reinvigorated, pedestrian and visitor friendly communities. Current and future residents, employees, and visitors in Augusta's urban core are

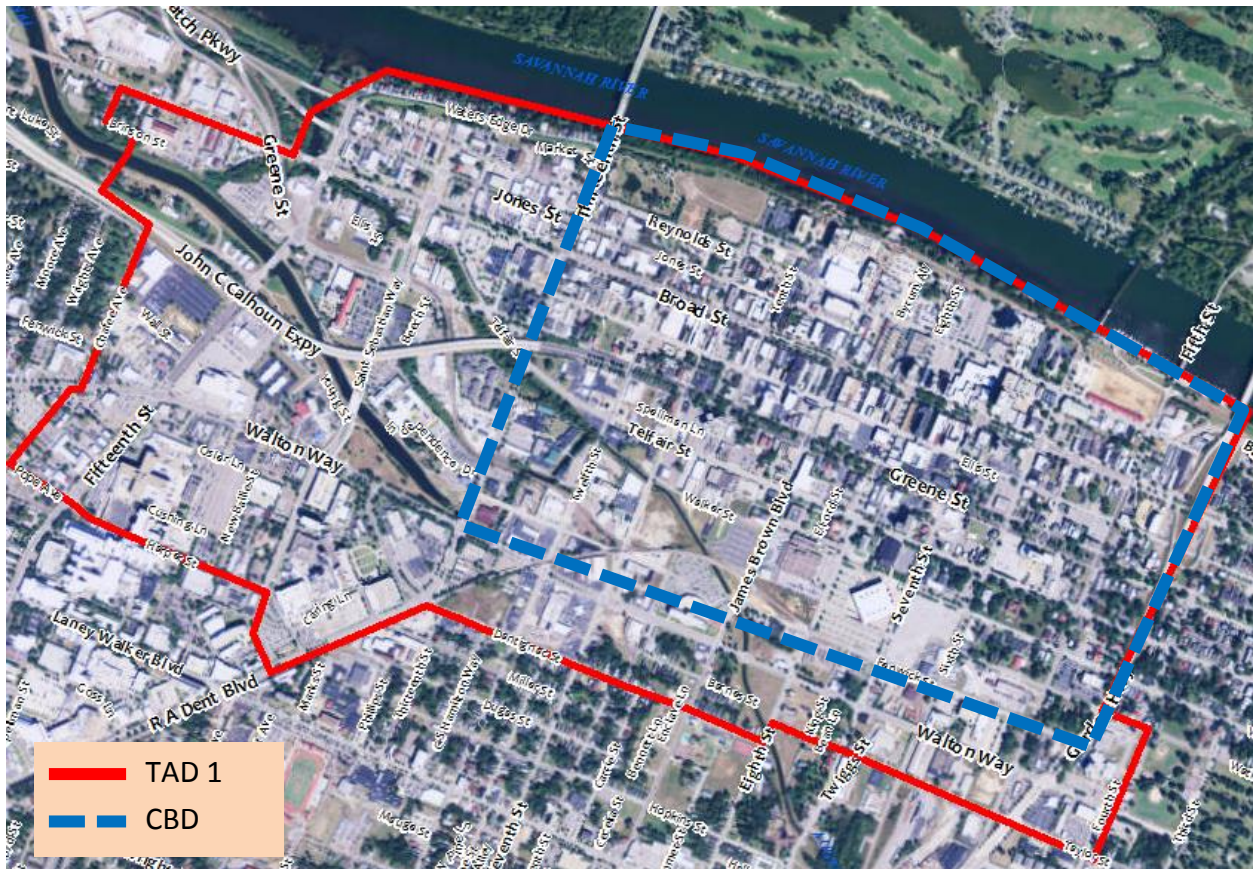
better connected and the downtown better served for the entire county. Once the transformation takes place, attractive places in terms of urban design can take root.

With readopting the Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update, the DRA will have the opportunity to continue with expanding its economic base, as proposed by the community and numerous planning efforts through a coordinated partnership of city departments, the Downtown Development Authority and public/private stakeholders. This updated plan documents the socioeconomic trends and projections in the DRA, along with a six square mile market analysis. This information highlights the changes in Augusta's downtown environment.

2.2 Socioeconomic Profile

DRA's socioeconomic character presents the need for downtown revitalization. The area boundaries are based on the original TAD. It is one of four designated TADs in the city. This TAD was first adopted by resolution on October 7, 2008, and later amended on May 5, 2009, and December 7, 2010. It expired December 2013, a month after the plan was last updated. Downtown continues to improve including its socioeconomic trends.

The DRA extends beyond the Central Business District (CBD). The CBD is bounded by 13th Street in the West, Walton Way in South, 3rd Street in the East, and the Savannah River in the north (*Figure 1*). Since DRA was based on the original TAD, its boundaries are carried forward into this socioeconomic analysis. The plan and its TAD are based on a set geography. The TAD's sole purpose was to use bonds to finance infrastructure and other redevelopment costs within the district boundaries. TADs exist during the terms of the bond and can be terminated when all bonds are paid off and the jurisdiction votes on its termination. DRA socioeconomic character has changed since 2010, due to successful revitalization efforts.

Figure 1: CBD and TAD 1 Boundary

Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

2.2.1 Methodology

DRA has evolved over the years, as parcels were added and removed with each amendment. A socioeconomic analysis presented in the next section shows the current DRA. While the TAD may no longer exist, downtown Augusta does and it continues to change. Data for the socioeconomic analysis is pulled from ESRI Community Analyst Data and is based on the following data sources ([Table 1 – 4](#)):

Table 1: Business Summary

Summary and Methodology	The Business Summary database gives you statistics for:
	• Total sales
	• Total number of employees
	• Number of businesses by industry (using SIC and NAICS classifications)
	Methodology: Business Locations and Business Summary Methodology
Topics:	Banking/Finance, Employment/Jobs/Labor, Education, Health, Insurance
Source:	ESRI, Dun & Bradstreet
Years Available:	2014
Geographies:	US, State, County, Census Tract, Block Group, Place, ZIP Code, CSD, CBSA, DMA, District

Table 2: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Summary and Methodology	Census 2010 and American Community Survey are designed to provide data that is more frequently updated than what is provided by the decennial census. The ACS collects and produces population and housing information every year. Demographics-Summarized from the Census Demographics database contains thousands of population characteristics like:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population - Such as marital status, age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households - Such as total households, total family households, average size
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income - Such as income by age, household disposable income, household net worth, per capita income
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing - Such as median home value, owner, renter and vacant units
	Methodology: http://www.ESRI.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/evaluating-population.pdf
Topics:	Demographics
Source:	ESRI, U.S. Census Bureau
Years Available:	2010, 2014
Geographies:	US, State, County, Census Tract, Block Group, Place, ZIP Code, CSD, CBSA, DMA, District

Table 3: Market Potential

Summary and Methodology	Measures probable demand for products or services by area compared to national averages. ESRI's Market Potential data tells you about the products and services consumers want and the civic attitudes they have. Market Potential identifies thousands of items in 20 categories. The information originates from consumer surveys compiled by GfK MRI. The categories below give you a glimpse of the data you'll get:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dining Out - Such as type of restaurant, frequency, fast food chain
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronics - Such as last purchase, what brand was bought, what was spent
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automobiles - Such as own or lease, most recent acquisition, miles driven, auto club
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby Products - Such as food and formula, diapers, personal care
	Methodology: 2014 Market Potential Methodology
Topics:	Banking/Finance, Employment/Jobs/Labor, Education, Energy, Environment/Natural Resources, Families, Health, Housing; Insurance, Transportation
Source:	ESRI, GfK MRI
Years Available:	2013
Geographies:	US, State, County, Census Tract, Block Group, Place, ZIP Code, CSD, CBSA, DMA, District

Table 4: Retail Market Place

Summary and Methodology	Measures supply and demand, accurately measure retail activity by trade area and compare retail sales to consumer spending by NAICS industry classification.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Drink
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automotive
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronics and Appliances
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Personal Care
	Methodology: 2014 Retail Market Place Methodology
Topics:	Demographics, Employment/Jobs/Labor
Source:	ESRI
Years Available:	2013
Geographies:	US, State, County, Census Tract, Block Group, Place, ZIP Code, CSD, CBSA, DMA, District

Figure 2 shows the DRA boundary followed by its socioeconomic profile. The area accounts for 1.62 square miles, bounded by:

- North – Savannah River
- East – Gordon Highway (US-1), and 4th Street
- South – D'Antignac Street, Taylor Street, RA Dent Blvd, Harper Street, and Pope Avenue
- West – Chafee Avenue, Perkins Street, and King Mill Street

Data is broken down into three periods:

- 2010 U.S. Census.
- 2015 calculated estimates from variety of resources and verified by ESRI.
- 2020 estimated projections forecasted by ESRI.

A small portion of downtown is currently part of a new TAD. This area is designed primarily to pay for portion of Holiday Inn Express renovations. TAD #4 was approved by Augusta Commission December 17, 2013 and will terminate when developer is reimbursed. Portion of TAD #4 includes the potential development along 15th street in an effort to expedite reimbursement to developer. A map of TAD 4 in relationship to DRA is provided in the Appendix.

Figure 2: DRA Boundary

Downtown Redevelopment Area Socioeconomic Analysis



2.2.2 Socioeconomic Analysis

People continue moving into and out of the DRA, leaving a population that neither increases nor decreases. [Table 5](#) shows the population has remained constant over the past five years and will remain the same in 2020. However, the numbers of households will increase and families decrease. Average household size has and will remain constant at 1.6, indicating a large single population. Furthermore, renter occupancy has increased from 86% to 89% during the same period. The median age has also increased, leading many to believe downtown is attracting an older population. Downtown apartments like St. John's Tower and Peabody Apartments are two high rises for the elderly. Others, such as Maxwell house has a high percentage of elderly population.

Table 5: Population and Housing Profile Summary

List	2010	2015	2020
Population	2,587	2,579	2,584
Households	1,225	1,242	1,255
Families	232	226	223
Average Household Size	1.66	1.64	1.63
Owner Occupied Housing Units	146	125	125
Renter Occupied Housing Units	1,079	1,117	1,131
Median Age	50.9	52.5	53.9

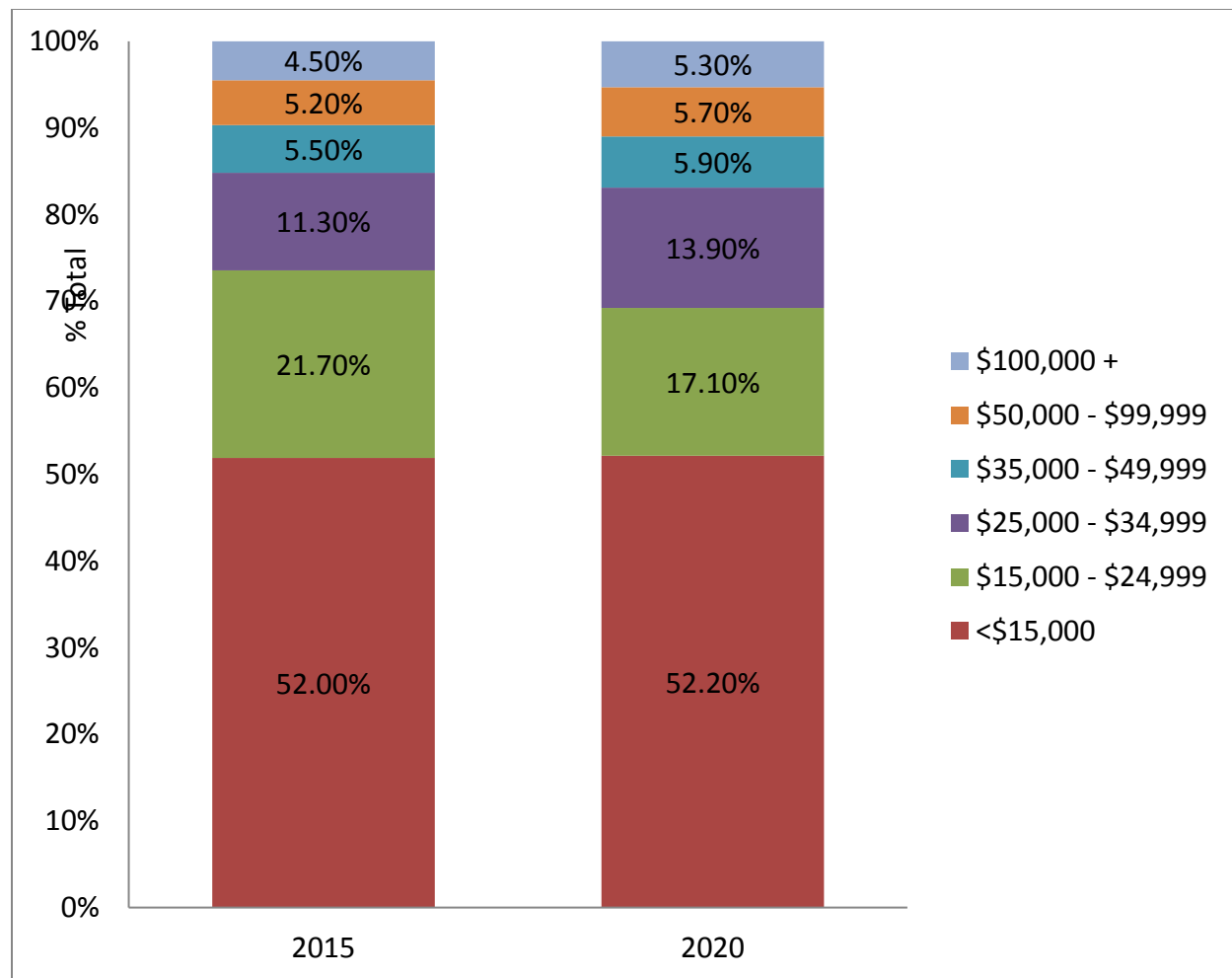
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

While population may not change, income levels will. [Table 6](#) and [Figure 3](#) show the income level for DRA. Average household and Per Capita income will increase almost 10% over the next 5 years, double the national inflation rate of 1.37% based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) published by Bureau of Labor Statistics. DRA's average household income level is over the U.S. 150% federal poverty guidelines (\$24,030 for a 2-member household). Households with median income greater than \$25,000 will increase from 26.5% to 30.8% in 5 years. These income levels are distributed among all race and ethnicities.

Table 6: Household Income Level Profile

List	2015			2020		
	DRA	Richmond	GA	DRA	Richmond	GA
Median Household Income	\$14,420	\$35,122	\$49,210	\$14,370	\$35,000	\$20,134
Average Household Income	\$25,593	\$48,757	\$68,131	\$28,065	\$53,466	\$39,216
Per Capita Income	\$15,731	\$19,557	\$24,470	\$17,261	\$21,459	\$21,597

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

Figure 3: Household Income Levels

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

Racial diversity has not changed over the past 5 years and will remain the same in the future. A slight increase (0.5%) in Hispanic population is anticipated from 2015 to 2020. [Table 7](#) breaks down the racial and ethnic profile of the area. A gradual change is taking place in the DRA: white population will decrease 4.3% while blacks will increase 3.6% between 2010 and 2020. This gradual change is also present in the DRA's population age groups.

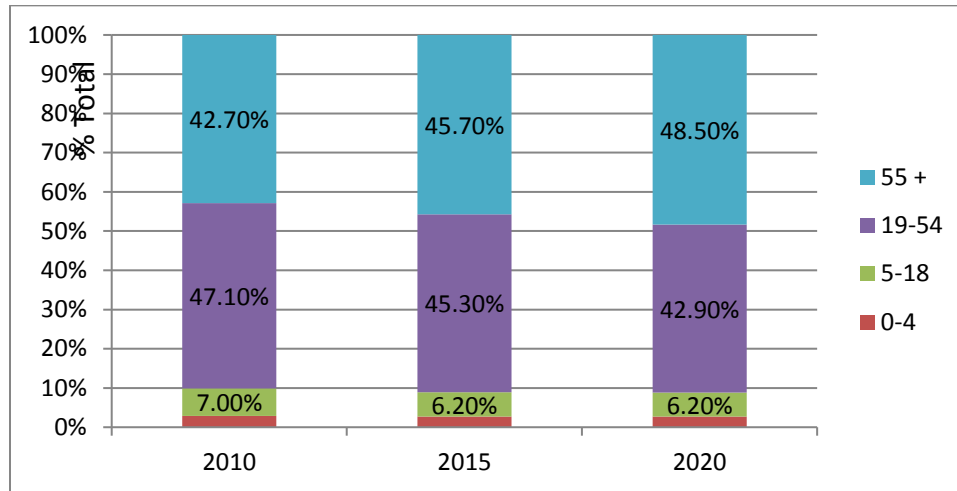
Table 7: Race and Ethnicity Profile

Race and Ethnicity	2010	2015	2020
White	39.40%	37.30%	35.10%
Black	57.40%	59.20%	61.00%
American Indian	0.30%	0.30%	0.30%
Asian	0.80%	0.80%	0.90%
Pacific Islander	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%
Some Other Race	0.70%	0.70%	0.80%
Two or More Races	1.40%	1.60%	1.90%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	2.40%	2.80%	3.30%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

The area's age group breakdown presents evidence of a much older population. DRA is home for more seniors than any other age group. Seniors age 55 years and older are projected to increase from 42.7% to 48.5% by 2020, while all other age groups decrease. The numbers of children under 18 years old are decreasing, as are adults (19-54 years old). While, majority of DRA's population are adults and elderly, (90%) *Figure 4* shows revitalization may attract both young and elderly people, just as it will renter and owner occupancy.

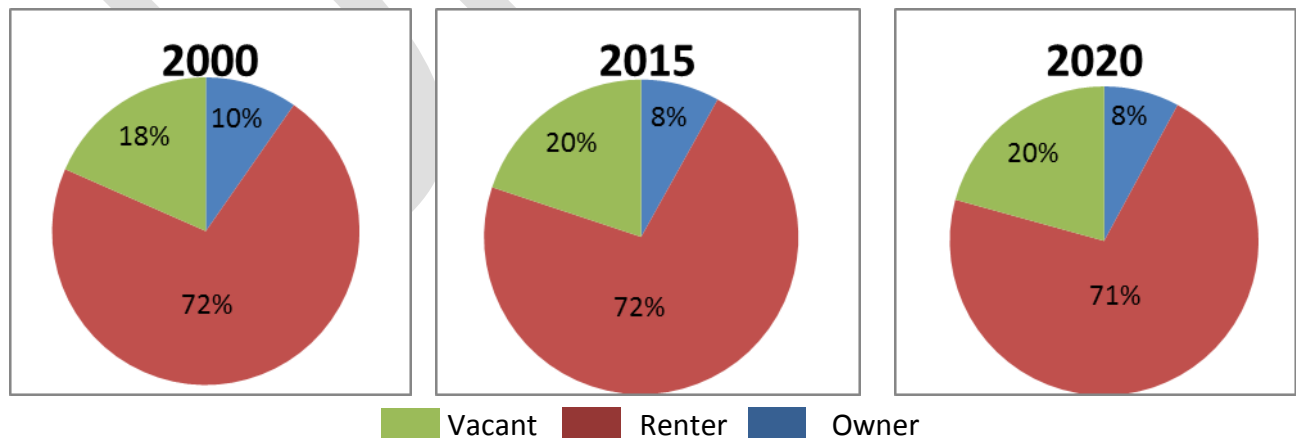
Figure 4: Population by Age Profile



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

DRA is predominantly renter occupied. Over 70% of housing units are renter-occupied, while only 8% are owner-occupied in 2015. Vacancy is slowly increasing from 18% to 20% (*Figure 5*). Vacancy is not abandoned or blighted property, but availability. Military personnel, university students, and other migrating populations rent property and moving as their situation dictates. A list of available residential and commercial vacant properties is found on page 22.

Figure 5: Occupied Housing Profile



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

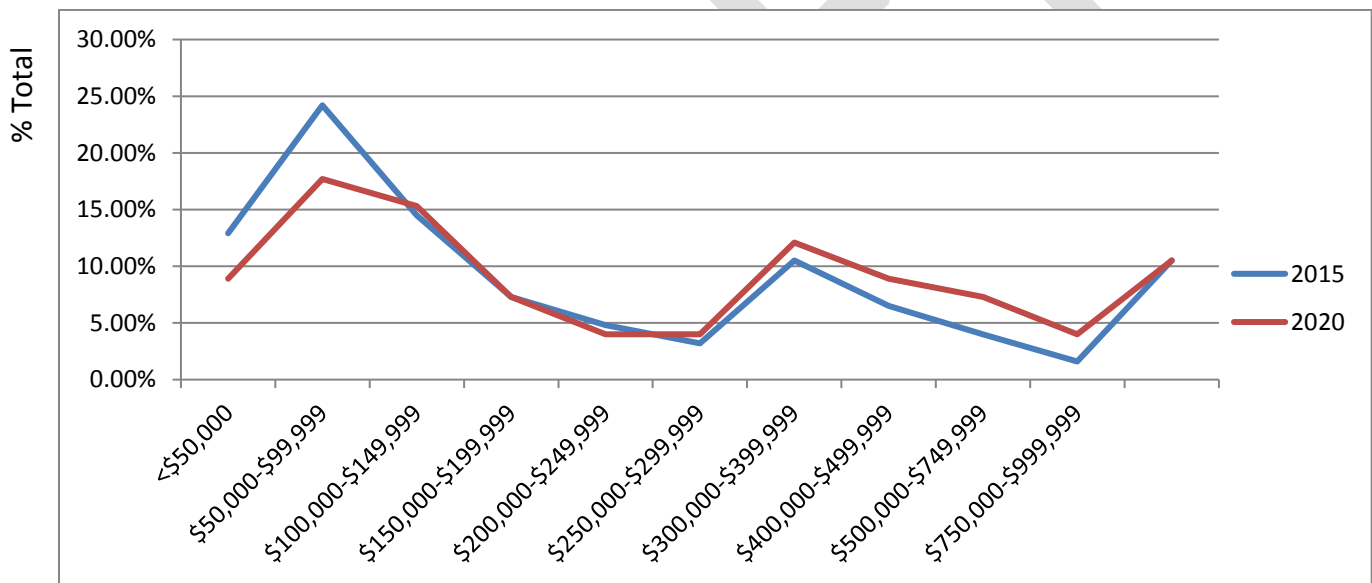
As more downtown properties are developed and renovated, surrounding property values will increase. [Table 8](#) and [Figure 6](#) show that residential property values in downtown will increase over the next 5 years; a 45% increase in median value and 17% increase in average value. Properties valued under \$100,000 will decrease below less than 10%, while properties valued over \$250,000 will increase over 5%. More than 10% of residential properties are valued over \$1 million and will remain so in 2020. Such increases in property value will attract only an educated population who can afford to live in downtown.

Table 8: Housing Value Profile

Property Value	2015	2020
Median Value	\$144,444	\$210,000
Average Value	\$308,065	\$361,492

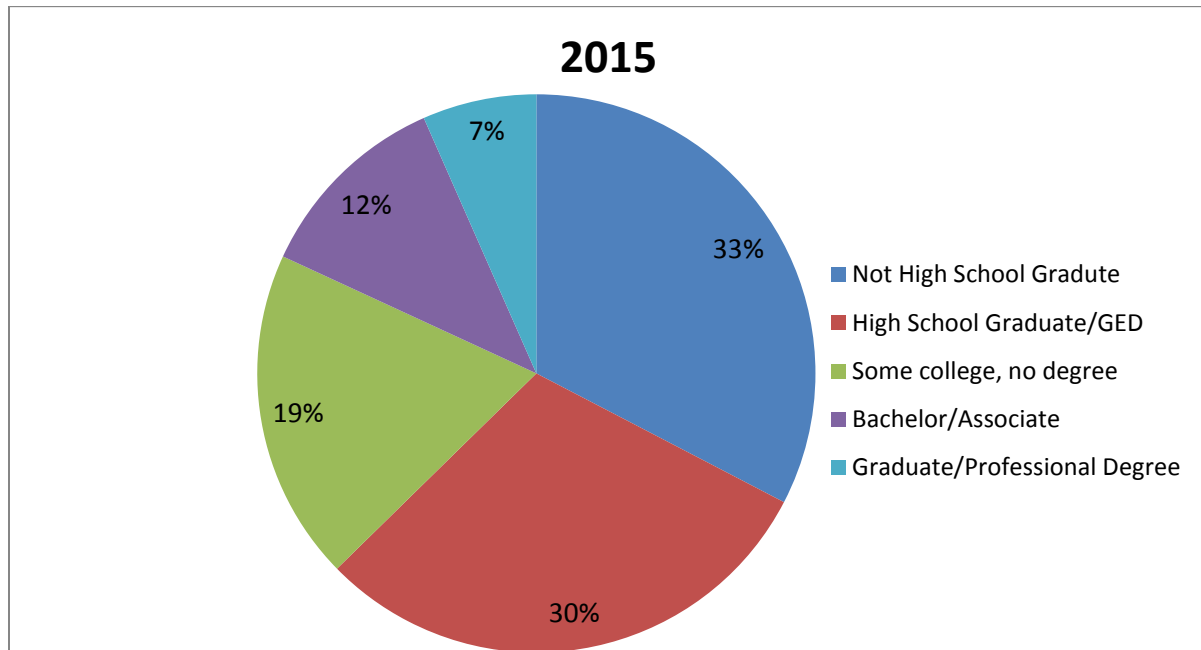
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

Figure 6: Housing Value Profile



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

Downtown currently has a high (67%) concentration of educated residents, which are people with high school diploma or more. Only one-third of the area's adult residents are not-high school graduates, while 30% are high school graduates. The remaining 37% area residents have some college education or degrees, including graduate and post graduate ([Figure 7](#)). The wide range of downtown education level is reflected in the areas varying employment levels.

Figure 7: Education Profile

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

The area is employed primarily by a service driven market, with over 65% employment in this industry. This is more evident based on occupation. The 65% of total service sector employment includes professional, administrative support and general service. Only 14.6% employment is in wholesale and retail trade industry. [Table 9](#) provides a detail breakdown of employment by occupation and industry. Together, these socioeconomic factors help show how people in downtown are spending their money.

Table 9: Employment Profile

Occupation	Percent	Industry	Percent
Management/Business/Financial	7.90%	Agriculture/Mining	0.00%
Professional	19.40%	Construction	4.90%
Sales	10.00%	Manufacturing	5.80%
Administrative Support	11.30%	Wholesale Trade	3.00%
Services	34.60%	Retail Trade	11.60%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	0.00%	Transportation/Utilities	2.10%
Construction/Extraction	7.90%	Information	2.40%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	2.20%	Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	0.40%
Production	3.10%	Services	65.30%
Transportation/Material Moving	3.60%	Public Administration	4.50%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, ESRI Community Analyst

In 2015, downtown Augusta accounted for over \$31,308,020 in retail sales and services. This is based on Bureau of Economic Analysis, GfK MRI. ESRI's data which includes information about the areas retail spending habits. This data originates from Bureau of Labor Statistics as part of their Consumer Expenditures Survey (CEX). It is based on retail sales and service projections including total expenditures, average spending per household and Spending Potential Index (SPI). The national average SPI is 100. Areas with SPI over 100 indicate people spend more money on such goods and service than the national average. All DRA retails sales and services are less than the national average in all categories (Table 10).

Table 10: DRA Retail Sales Profile

List	Apparel & Service	Computer & Accessories	Education	Entertainment /Recreation	Food at Home
Total	\$1,042,173	\$113,733	\$696,503	\$1,338,028	\$2,454,264
Average Spent	\$839.11	\$91.57	\$560.79	\$1,077.32	\$1,976.06
Spending Potential Index	36	35	37	33	38
List	Investments	Retail Goods	Shelter	TV/Video/ Audio	Travel
Total	\$938,353	\$10,497,393	\$7,900,160	\$613,615	\$714,601
Average Spent	\$755.52	\$8,452.01	\$6,360.84	\$494.05	\$575.36
Spending Potential Index	27	33	39	38	29
List	Food Away from Home	Health Care	HH Furnishings	Photography	Home Operation
Total	\$1,440,494	\$1,941,755	\$740,908	\$30,597	\$ 241,939
Average Spent	\$1,159.82	\$1,563.41	\$596.54	\$24.64	\$ 194.80
Spending Potential Index	35	33	32	30	33
List	Vehicle Repair	Toys & Games	Sports and Exercise	Reading	
Total	\$467,284	\$10,426	\$61,612	\$64,182	
Average Spent	\$376.24	\$8.39	\$49.61	\$51.68	
Spending Potential Index	34	36	26	34	

Source: Survey of the American Consumer compiled by GfK MRI, ESRI

The socioeconomic analysis involves all downtown properties, historical and modern. Some of these properties are described in the next section.

2.3 Historic Properties in Downtown

Downtown Augusta's place in American history is evident in its multiple national and local historic districts and properties, at last count, approaching 6,200 properties.

The city's downtown central business district encompasses the rise and fall and rebirth of the city's development history. Two of the three areas designated as local historic districts by the Augusta Commission are located within this area: Downtown and Olde Town. Additionally, several of the city's National Register Historic Districts and properties are located, partially or wholly, within this area, including the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area/Historic Augusta Canal and Industrial District and the Augusta Downtown Historic District.

Most of the properties of the proposed DRA fall within the city's downtown historic district: the parcels on the block bounded by Gordon Highway, Watkins Street, and Walton Way and Fourth Street are non-contributing properties within the Olde Town Historic District.

These areas contain many architecturally and historically significant structures targeted for preservation. In November, 2012, Historic Augusta presented its Preservation Award to the Red Star Building at 531 James Brown Blvd. (saved from near collapse), the Wier/Stewart building at 982 Broad Street (now occupied by small creative companies) and the Henry- Cohen House at 9920 Greene St. (formerly condemned).

If public funds are used to alter any historic property within the Augusta DRA, such alterations will follow relevant federal, state and local guidelines and requirements. Only properties subject to design review are those located in local historic districts.

2.4 Description of the DRA

The Augusta Commission has designated six sites as key to a widespread redevelopment in downtown Augusta. Several sites have been identified as specific projects in the Westobou Vision: Augusta/North Augusta 2009 Master Plan. These sites include:

The Municipal Building Complex is a 6.46 acres' site bounded by Greene, Telfair, Fifth and Sixth Streets. The Augusta Richmond County Municipal Building, number of small satellite buildings owned by Augusta, and two privately owned parcels are located here. One building is for the city's new Information Technology center. The Municipal Building was constructed in 1956 and serves as the location of most of the county governmental offices.



Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

The Municipal Building was once the judiciary for Richmond County, prior to completion of the Augusta-Richmond County Judicial Center and John H. Ruffin, Jr. Courthouse in 2011. The county acquired several smaller buildings in the block and uses them for additional office space. The Complex, as a whole, has been infused with millions in renovations. As the visible embodiment of the government, the municipal building renovation creates a vibrant downtown area.



Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

The 600 Broad Street was constructed in the mid 1970s and designed by noted architect, I. M. Pei. The property is approximately 0.3 acres and once housed the Chamber of Commerce for many years. The building has been renovated and now houses local artists, and the Augusta Regional Collaboration, a business incubator. The building is no longer an impediment to redevelopment efforts in the lower Broad Street.

The "Old Depot" site was previously owned by a City pension plan and is often referred to as the Pension Property. Augusta acquired the 6.27-acre tract in 2005 and began remediating it. Although vacant, except for the train depot which is in need of repair, the site is a key component of downtown revitalization.



Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department



Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

Port Royal site is a mixed use residential and commercial property which opened in 1991. The commercial portion closed within a few years of opening, and was repurposed later as the National Science Center's Fort Discovery exhibition center and museum, which included a 250-seat theater. Since Fort Discovery closed in late 2010, the commercial portion has been renovated and is now home to Unisys Corporation. The 1.740-acre property anchors the Riverwalk and is an important barometer of downtown viability. Additional improvements include a mixture of private offices and public spaces.

The Coliseum Complex is 19.23 acres and is comprised of the James Brown Arena (formerly known as the Augusta- Richmond County Civic Center), the William B. Bell Auditorium and the associated parking lots. The James Brown Arena is a 14,500 sq. ft. exhibit hall opening into the 23,000 sq. ft. arena floor. The arena seats 8,500 people. The exhibit hall opened in 1974 and the arena opened in 1980. The Bell Auditorium opened in 1940 and seats 2,690. In 2010 bonds were issued to fund much needed capital improvements. The Complex is a key entertainment venue for the Augusta area but faces competition from a number of other entertainment and exhibition spaces in the area.



Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

The former Main Library site is at the intersection of Greene and James Brown Boulevard. The international style structure housed the offices of the East Central Georgia Regional Library and served Augusta's main library. The building has remained vacant since the library and offices were located to the current Telfair Street building in 2010. The building is currently being renovated as the new Public Defender office. The building is located on one of Augusta's most scenic thoroughfares. Current renovations of the 1.4-acre site including two contiguous parcels for the Public Defender office.



Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

Tax Parcel Identification numbers for the various parcels included in the Augusta DRA are listed in Appendix A, including maps of the DRA. The next chapter presents downtown Augusta's market analysis.

3 DRA Market Analysis

Market analysis is a very effective tool for development; it evaluates unique economic characteristics of a given community, its surrounding, and regional influences. It is a standard practice with real estate and development companies. While each company may have specialized analytical practices, certain components are standards throughout the practice. A detail methodology and market analysis, demonstrating DRA's economic potential is provided below.

3.1 Methodology

A typical real estate market report analyzes the immediate area's socioeconomic profile, target/market areas, competition, project sales and revenue potential. Each component uses a variety of data sources. The following is a list of data sources used to compile the DRA Market Analysis:

- U.S. Census
- American Community Survey
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- ESRI Community Analyst
- Retail Strategies Inc.
- Augusta Planning and Development Department
- Dun & Bradstreet

The Socioeconomic Profile in chapter 1 presents some of the data from these sources, data limited to the DRA. Another analysis is based on target/market areas, in and around the DRA. These target/market areas are divided into three categories:

1. Primary (Local) – One square mile consisting of people and businesses whose residence is in the DRA.
2. Secondary (Commute) – Three square miles consisting of people and businesses whose destination is the DRA, including portions of North Augusta, SC.
3. Tertiary (Regional) – Six square miles consisting of people and businesses who travel to and from the DRA, including portions of North Augusta and Aiken County, SC and Columbia County, SC.

Retail Strategies from Birmingham Alabama recently conducted a market analysis of Downtown Augusta¹ using a similar methodology. They reported the 2013 population and its projection to 2018. They also reported the average household and disposable income (*Table 11*). Retail Strategies' market analysis and the research presented in this chapter demonstrate DRA's growing economic potential.

¹ Market Research and Strategic Plan, Retail Strategies, March 2014

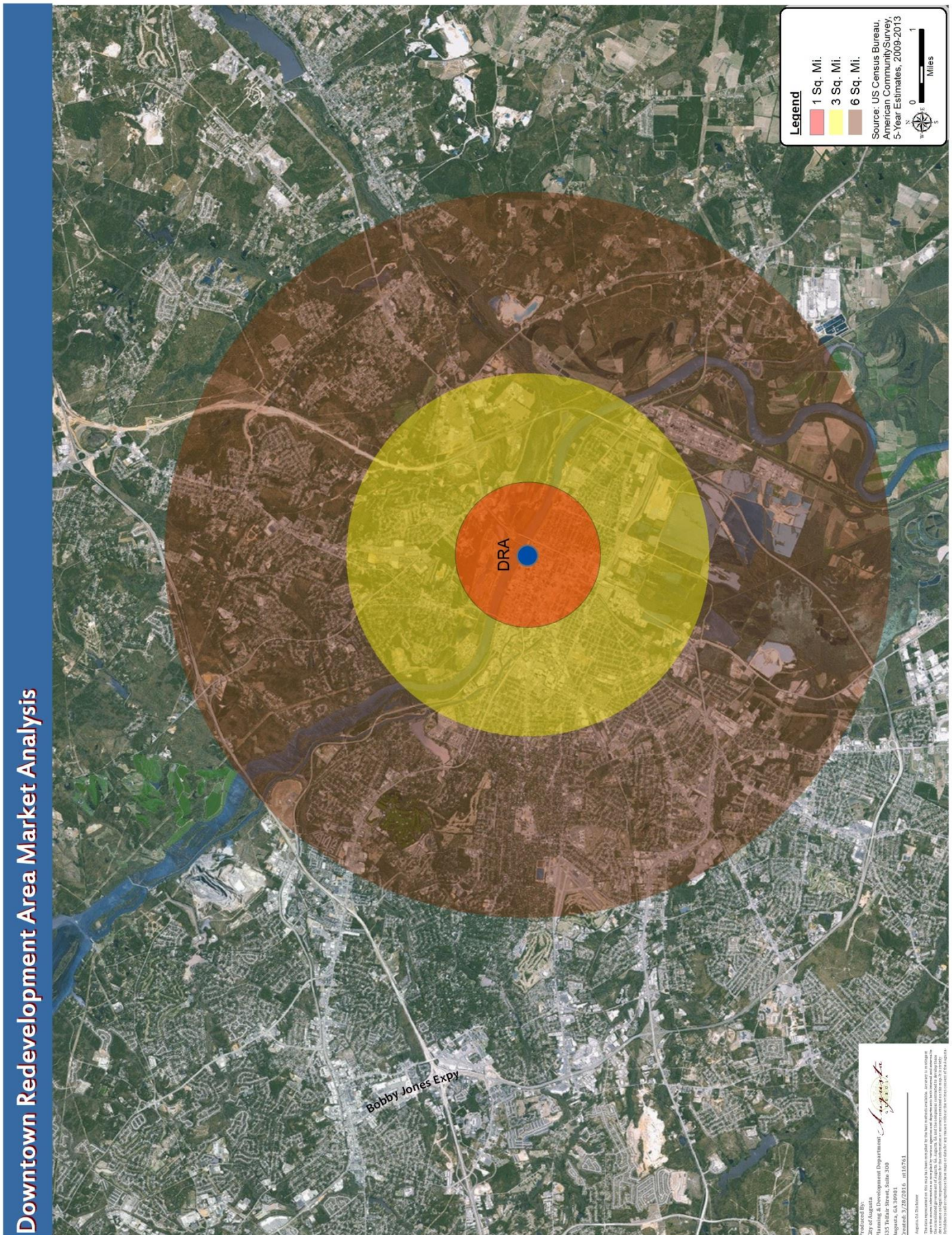
Table 11: Retail Strategies Market Analysis

	2013 Population	2018 Projected Population	Average Household Income	Average Disposable Income
3 Mile Radius	43,835	44,651	\$ 38,343	\$ 31,513
5 Mile Radius	97,219	99,660	\$ 46,381	\$ 37,636
5 Minute Drive Time	11,557	11,644	\$ 30,686	\$ 25,628
10 Minute Drive Time	66,996	68,571	\$ 41,597	\$ 34,108

Source: Retail Strategies, Birmingham, AL.

The following updated DRA market analysis presents numerous opportunities that will attract new businesses, residents and services. These opportunities include capturing portions of the North Augusta and South Augusta markets. *Figure 8* shows the extent of the three market areas, all of which capture portions of these areas. Competitive analysis and extrapolated projections are outside the scope of this market analysis.

Figure 8: DRA Market Analysis



This Market Analysis follows standard practice used by Retail Strategies and describes key findings using excel, GIS and ESRI Community Analyst tools to evaluate DRA's primary, secondary, and tertiary target/market areas' economic integrity. The process used to arrive at the recent findings consist of:

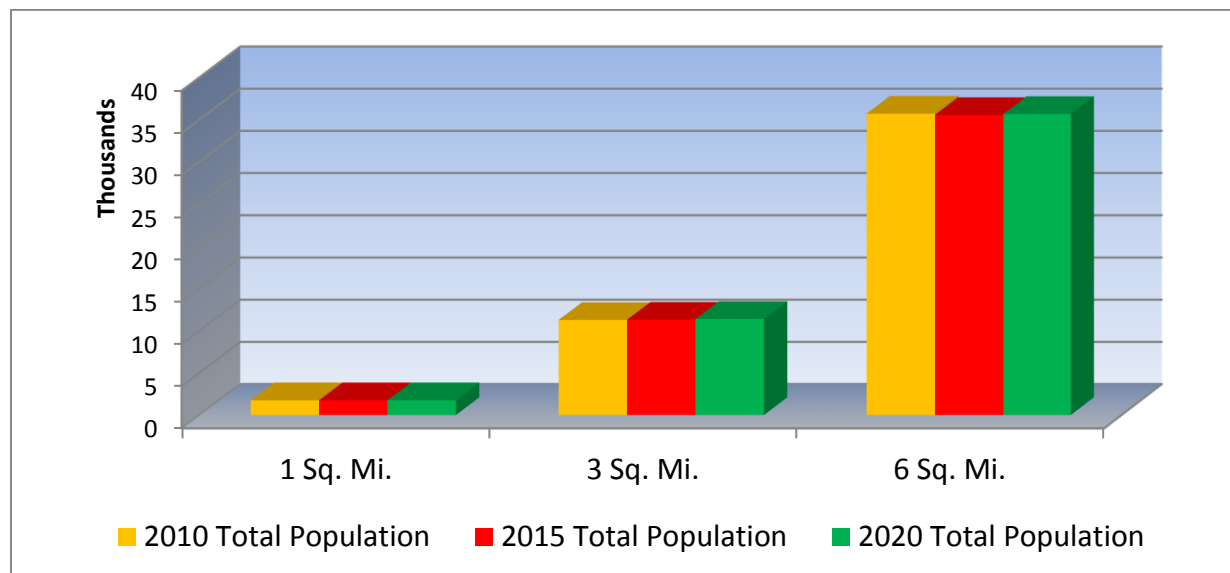
1. Data pulled from all data sources listed on page 17 using Community Analysis.
2. GIS used to generate map of target/market areas and confirm data attribute table associated with the data.
3. Attribute table extracted to excel and converted to graphs presenting the target/market areas.

This methodology resulted in a detail analysis of all three market areas. While the socioeconomic analysis focuses on the DRA boundary, the market analysis takes portions of North Augusta and the region into consideration. The results are described below.

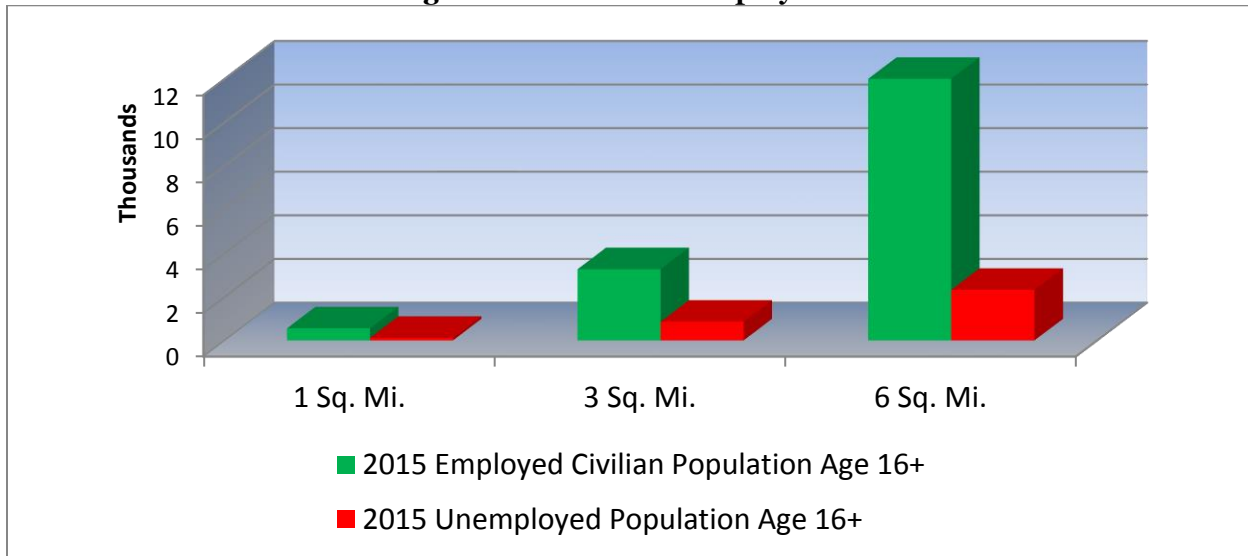
3.2 Market Analysis Update

The socioeconomic analysis profiles the DRA. This market analysis describes the financial nature and its impact on the surrounding area. Population and employment potential for all three market areas are described in [Figures 9](#) and [10](#). New residential development (e.g. JB Whites building) attracts and retains new downtown residents. Benefits of a strong market include, renovating historic buildings and other commercial properties, creating new jobs, increasing property values, and attracting more residents and businesses.

Figure 9: DRA Total Population



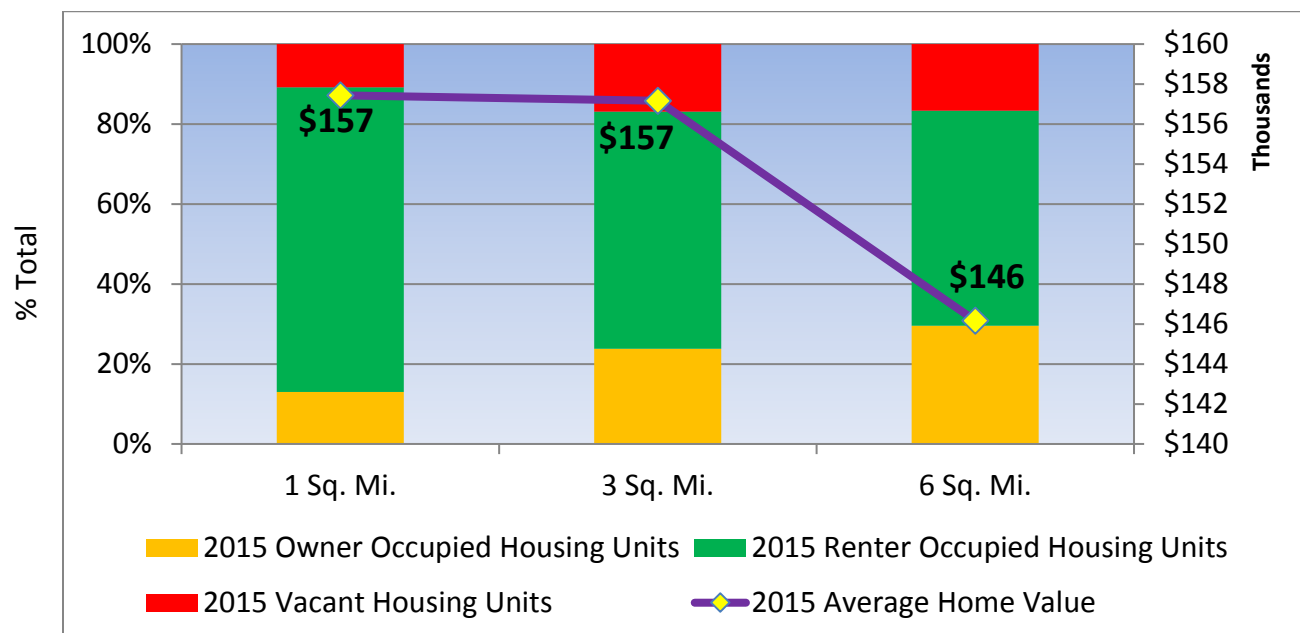
Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department, ESRI Community Analyst

Figure 10: DRA Total Employment

Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department, ESRI Community Analyst

Downtown Augusta has a high unemployment rate but lower than other market areas. DRA unemployment rates in primary area is 17.5% while secondary is 20.8%. [Figure 11](#) indicates DRA property values and occupancy. The same holds true for occupancy rates. More people in the DRA rent than own.

Property value on the other hand is different. Over 80% of the residents, within a six (6) square mile, are renters. An estimated 10% of the DRA's residential units are vacant and available for immediate occupancy. As DRA property values increase, surrounding real estate markets will too. Primary real estate markets have a direct relationship to secondary markets as [Figure 11](#) indicates. The Depot site and Port Royal are ideal locations for mixed-use development, especially residential and commercial uses, within a historic context. Most of Port Royal building is used as condominiums and occupied by Unisys Corporation.

Figure 11: DRA Occupancy and Property Value

Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department, ESRI Community Analyst

Properties like the Marriott Convention Center, Riverfront Condominiums (Port Royal Building), and the weekly farmer's market held every Saturday (From January through November) are proven successes of DRA's market potential. Residents, visitors, tourist, and business travelers take full advantage of the mixed-use opportunities in downtown Augusta. The following is a brief list of properties available in DRA ([Table 12](#)).

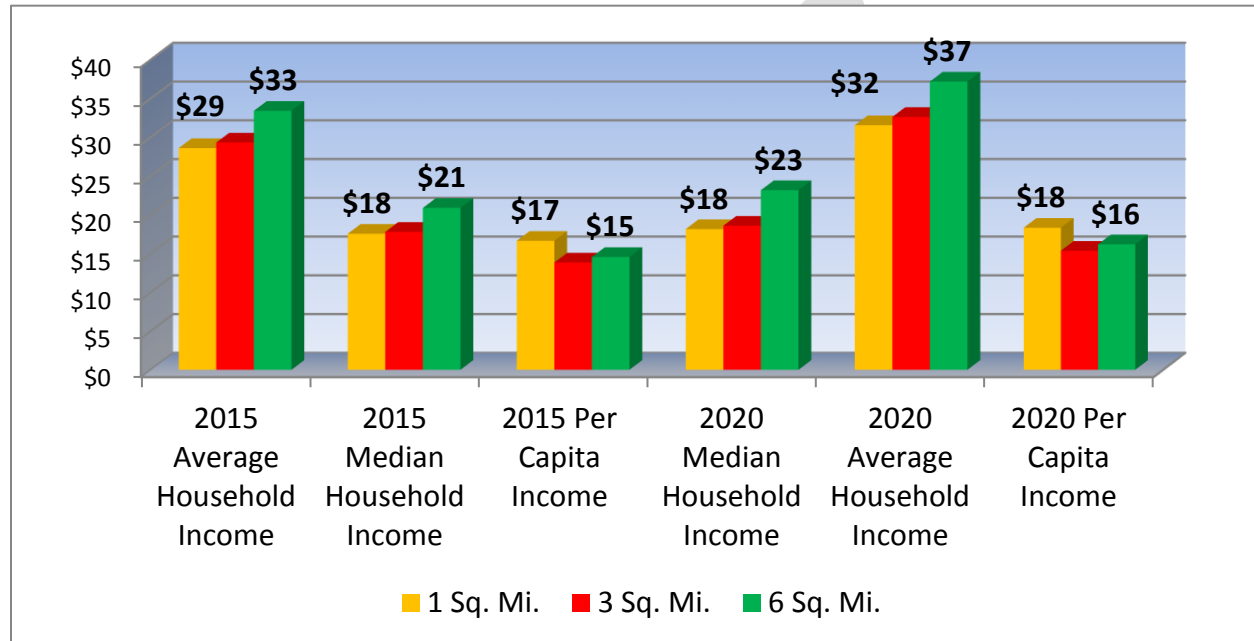
Table 12: DRA Available Properties

List	Address	List	Address
Medical Center Bank	1424 Walton Way	Parking lot	726 Broad Street
Retail Space	1283 Broad Street	The Long Building	305/307 8th street
Restaurant Site	1253 Broad Street	Artist Row District	1046 Broad Street
Artist Row District	1018 Broad Street	Artist Row District	1024 Broad Street
JB White Building	936 Broad Street	Kress Building	914 Broad Street
Augusta Riverfront Center	1 10th Street	Apartments	208 4th Street
Green Building	1019 Broad Street	Apartments	303 Green Street
List	Address	List	Address
Merry Land Building	702 Broad Street	Homes	1107 Green Street
Union Savings Bank Bldg.	771 Broad Street	Homes	411 Watkins

Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department, Downtown Development Authority

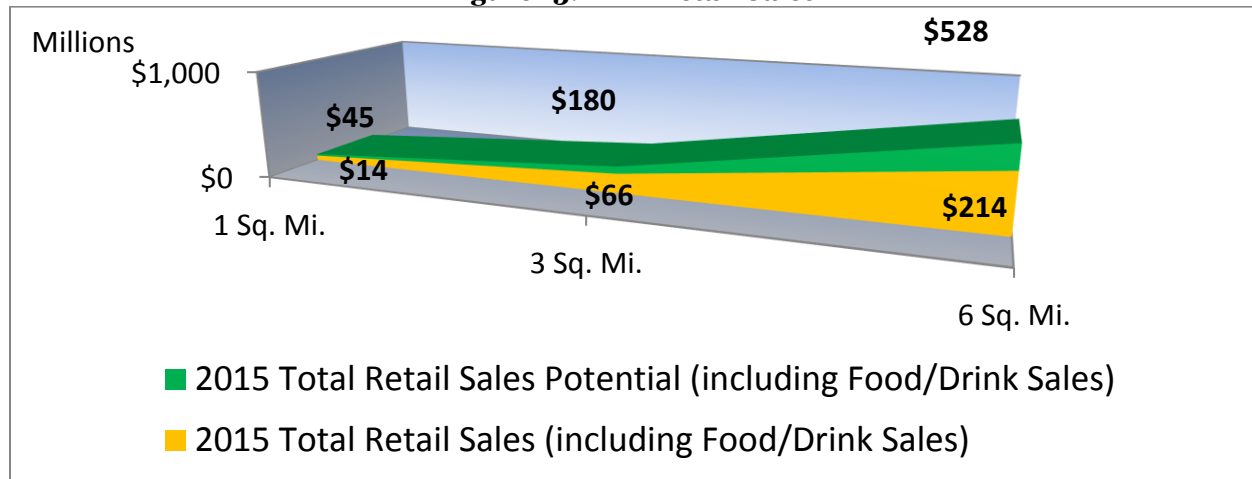
As new businesses are attracted to these available properties, income levels in these market areas will continue to increase. In 2015, average household income in the primary market was estimated at \$25,598 (\$16,639 per capita), according to ESRI Community Analyst. This will change by 2020. ESRI Community Analysis reports average household income increasing to \$31,559 (\$18,328 per capita) for the DRA primary market area (*Figure 12*). This again indicates a higher inflation rate than the national average. As income levels increase, so too could retail sales and services.

Figure 12: DRA Income Levels
(In Thousands of Dollars)



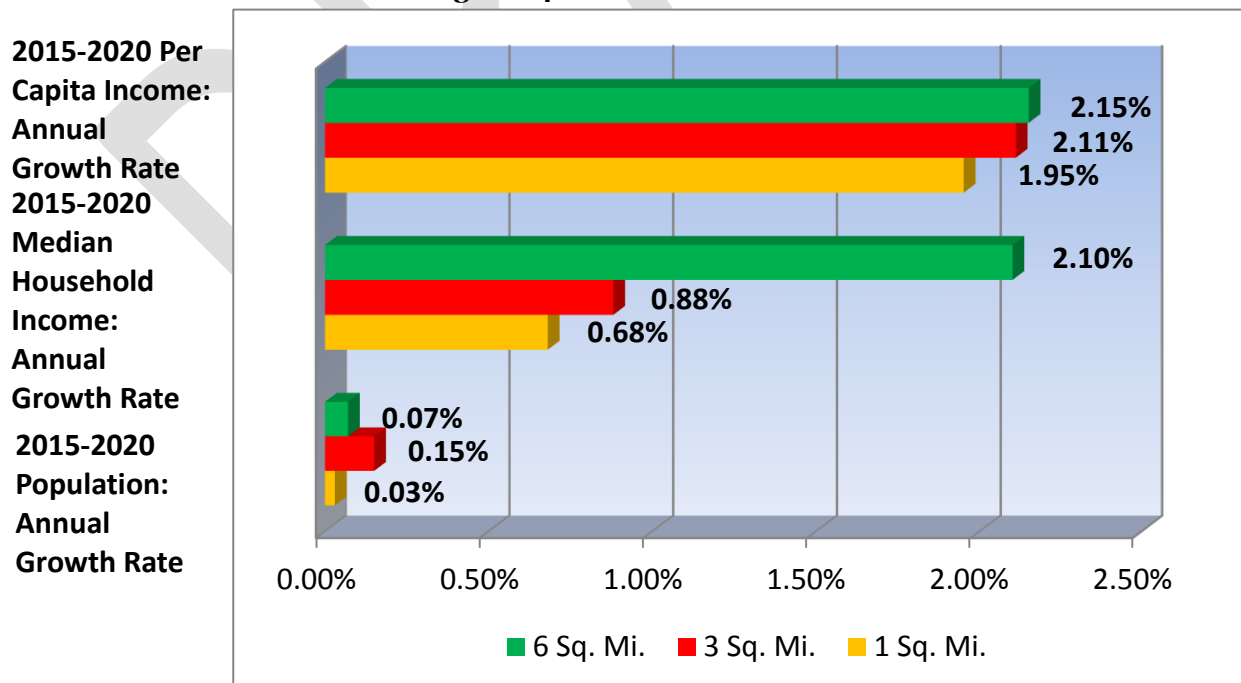
Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department, ESRI Community Analyst

Retail sales in the DRA may triple as more businesses are attracted to the area and people earning more money. Total retail sales (with leakage) is estimated at over \$14 million, with the potential (without leakage) to exceed \$45 million. This includes food and drink sales. Retail sales potential triple in the secondary market from \$66 million to \$180 million (*Figure 13*) in 2015; this indicates a positive growth rate.

Figure 13: DRA Retail Sales

Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department, ESRI Community Analyst

Annual growth rates from 2015 to 2020 are projected to increase as downtown becomes more developed. *Figure 14* shows the three growth rates in all market levels. While the DRA population growth rate may be only .03%, median household income annual growth rate is .68% and per capita annual growth rate is triple at 1.95% in the primary market. Secondary market is relatively proportional with: .88% median household income annual growth rate and 2.11% per capita annual growth rate. The DRA growth potential continues to rise, providing for more economic opportunities.

Figure 14: DRA Income Growth Rate

Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department, ESRI Community Analyst

Most of downtown has been successfully redeveloped and other parts continue being revitalized. Many sites meet the criteria set by the Urban Redevelopment Law, as described in the next chapter.

4 Redevelopment Criteria within URA

The downtown mix of improved and unimproved properties may not meet the criteria of an Urban Redevelopment Area (URA). The Urban Redevelopment Area may include properties in the Downtown Redevelopment Area (DRA). The law requires an Urban Redevelopment Plan for the target area to address “pockets of blight” by activating plans which could include acquisition, rehabilitation or demolition, construction or reconstruction of public spaces, and preparing land for redevelopment. The main criteria set by the Urban Redevelopment Law (O.C.G.A. § 36-61-2) is local jurisdiction designating a geographic area as “pocket of blight.” *(Revised 9/9/16)

“Pocket of blight clearance and redevelopment” may include: *(Revised 9/9/16)

- Acquisition of a pocket of blight or portion thereof;
- Rehabilitation or demolition and removal of buildings and improvements;
- Installation, construction, or reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other improvements necessary for carrying out in the area the urban redevelopment provisions; and
- Making the land available for development or redevelopment by private enterprise or public agencies, including sale, initial leasing, or retention by the municipality or county itself, at its fair value for uses in accordance with the urban redevelopment plan.

In addition, Augusta’s downtown has some unique development constraints that negatively impact the geographic area:

- A levee prevents direct access from the downtown to the Savannah River;
- Rail lines bisect Downtown and run through historic areas;
- An expressway and busy thoroughfares carrying heavy traffic volumes creates a psychological barrier between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, limiting expansion;
- Numerous underutilized and abandoned properties and vacant storefronts;
- Multiple ownership is a barrier to assembling larger parcels for redevelopment; and
- Large areas of empty surface parking and underused land.

This plan offers local government the opportunity to identify important projects in the area that would otherwise not receive private investment. It serves to improve the immediate downtown area and have positive influence on surrounding neighborhoods. Specific properties in the DRA have successfully been improved while others continue to be revitalized, since the plan was last updated in 2013.

4.1 Municipal Building - Project Update

The Augusta Richmond County Municipal Building previously housed a significant portion of The County's judiciary and administrative offices. Since the construction of a new courthouse, the Municipal Building now houses various County government agencies, including offices of the Mayor, Commission, Administrator and Clerk, meeting rooms, voting and registrar, planning and zoning, marshals, finance, procurement, and others. The Law Department, Engineering and Information Technology are located on the same block, but in different buildings.

The Municipal Building is a 125,641 square foot nine-story building built in 1957. The building structure is cast-in-place reinforced concrete and clad in marble. The roof is modified bitumen. In 2008, the windows, exterior caulking and roof were replaced. There are also three wood-framed buildings with red-brick veneers and asphalt shingle roofs on the site. These three buildings house the Engineering Department. The Button Gwinnett Building is an approximately 2,236 square foot two-story building and houses the Engineering Department's Administration Division. The Telfair Building is approximately 2,329 square feet and houses the Traffic Engineering Division and the third building is an approximately 6,404 square foot building, currently housing the Law Department.

All buildings are updated, safe and secure improving the delivery of government services. Each building has been renovated and the work environment is made more efficient. The Municipal Building renovation has been complete and most of the departments have moved in.

The Municipal Building renovation project renewed, and expanded the buildings on the site, and included one new building for Information Technology. The work on the old courthouse building included new public and meeting spaces not requiring secured access for advance voting and community meetings and serves as a new building entrance, consisting of an approximately 126,000 square foot addition renovation space, new Commission chambers, additional office space, elevator improvements including an elevator tower addition, smoke evacuation areas, and other safety and mechanical replacements and other improvements. Partial demolition and rebuilding were required in order to make the needed improvements.

The Municipal Building Project cost was approximately \$40,500,000 and financed with approximately \$8,884,000 of SPLOST VI proceeds of, approximately \$5,665,000 were proceeds from the 2010 SPLOST Bonds, and \$26,500,000 revenue bonds issued and sold by the Downtown Development Authority. All monies were based on current costs. Augusta-Richmond County bought and secured the revenue bonds through an intergovernmental contract with the Downtown Development Authority to provide services associated with the Municipal Building project. The bonds have an approximate 20-year term. The bonds were callable and satisfied from the SPLOST VII proceeds, recently authorized by the voters. Building title and improvements are transferred to the Downtown Development Authority so the project could proceed and was reverted back to the County upon satisfaction of the bonds.

The project conformed to the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and requires no changes in zoning, land use, maximum density and other building requirements. The County Commission performed all necessary duties to complete the project.

The building was renovated in accordance with the Public Works Law and provided for private enterprise participation to the extent feasible.

4.2 Port Royal - Project Update

The Port Royal renovation renewed and repurposed two commercial floors of the Port Royal building, most of it is leased to Unisys Corporation.

The Project involved nearly 90,000 sq. ft. of class A rental office space for the Downtown Development Authority and small business incubators. In addition, the project includes a public riverfront art gallery, 8,000 sq. ft. of restaurant space, and renovated the existing 250 seat theater for local performance groups. When renovations are completed, the Port Royal building will help retain nearly 400 jobs and add nearly 100 new jobs. As Port Royal is an anchor to the riverwalk, the site's availability is of a major importance to downtown. It brings nearly 500 additional people into the central business district and onto the riverwalk, increases safety and stimulates the downtown economy.

The project costs were funded by bonds issued by the Downtown Development Authority bonds, which used the proceeds to acquire the project and construct the improvements.

The project conforms to the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, and requires no changes in zoning land use, maximum density and other building requirements.

The County Commission and Downtown Development Authority have performed all necessary duties to complete the project.

4.3 Depot Site - Project Update

The Depot Site project provides temporary parking for employees and visitors to the renovated Port Royal building and other parts of downtown.

The project cost depends on the parking needs for Port Royal building, but is expected to be less than \$1,500,000. The project costs will be funded by bonds issued by Downtown Development Authority, which will use the proceeds to acquire and construct the improvements. A temporary parking lot has been approved for the site.

The Depot site requires no changes in zoning, land use, maximum density or other building requirements but needs to be approved by the Riverfront Review Board and the Historic Preservation Commission.

The County Commission and Downtown Development Authority are performing all necessary duties to complete the Project. There are no other plans for the site or any potential development of it.

The site is adjacent to a railroad line with an existing station. The station requires an estimated \$6.8 million in renovations and expansion. A site inspection was conducted on the station to determine what will be required to bring the building back to life.

4.3.1 Depot Station Renovation and Upgrade

Certain improvements must be completed to fully use the Depot Site. These include:

- Base Level Renovations/Upgrades \$400,000
 - Stabilize masonry structure, railing and opening
 - Provide limited electrical service for lighting and ventilation
 - Provide accessible restrooms and entry for limited staff
 - Replace wooden flooring at west end
- Level One: \$150,000
 - Upgrade electrical
 - Greater emphasis on securing exterior and providing security alarm
- Level Two: \$250,000
 - Provide multiple accessible entrances and restrooms
- Level Three \$2,000,000
 - Upgraded electrical service and common area
 - Life Safety Upgrades and Paving
- Level Four \$4,000,000
 - Life safety upgrades, additional restrooms, kitchen spaces

While those projects listed above are vital to downtown's redevelopment, other projects have been successfully implemented. These additional projects also contribute to DRA's revitalization and are presented in the following chapter.

5 Future Private Redevelopment Projects and Investment

Downtown Augusta has the potential for a sustainable transformation in the future, given the newly merged Augusta University campuses, the state's support for economic development that

expand home-grown businesses, and a metro population that increasingly supports the arts, history and culture of Georgia's second-largest city.

On the drawing board is an estimated \$316 million or more in redevelopment dreams and plans (waiting to break ground, others having done so already) for major investments in the downtown area. These proposed developments are dependent on the various areas' physical environment and public infrastructure sufficient to support them.

5.1 Community Vision for the Augusta DRA

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda was developed to "guide the city's future and serve as the basis for policy decisions of the city's elected and appointed leaders and staff." Local redevelopment decisions must be consistent with the recommendations found in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. These recommendations include downtown's community vision.

Vision for Downtown: *"Downtown Augusta will maintain and enhance its historic character and unique mix of land uses. Downtown will continue to reflect the predominant characteristics of a historic central business district, while at the same time adapting to the changing environment around it. Underutilized parcels will be redeveloped in a manner consistent with the overall vision for downtown and with respect for existing development patterns and the historic architecture in the area. Redevelopment will include new medium and high-density housing, additional commercial and office development, new civic and institutional facilities and shopping and entertainment facilities. Adaptive reuse of historic buildings will be a key component. New development will respect the scale, massing, architecture and other design elements of the existing historic structures."*

Recommended development patterns in DRA include:

- New residential, commercial and institutional development built in accordance with established design guidelines and with respect to historic character and traditional development patterns of downtown;
- Medium and high-density housing in new and existing buildings, including office, retail, and service development;
- Enhanced arts, entertainment and sports facilities;
- Stronger physical connections between the riverfront and downtown;
- Public infrastructure (public buildings, streets, landscaping, parks, sidewalks, etc.) that support and complement other development;
- Attractive gateways to the city supplemented by a coordinated way finding signage; and
- Transportation system that accommodates all modes of travel and is accessible to all.

Public and private development projects in line with the downtown vision and recommended development patterns are listed below.

5.2 Recent Improvement Initiatives

Private Projects:

- Sutherland Mill (medical condos/offices)
- J.B White's Building (residential and retail)
- Augusta Convention Center
- Holiday Inn Express
- Hotel Development (potential between Augusta Common and James Brown Blvd.)
- Housing Redevelopment discussion/plans near the Lamar Building

Public Projects

- St. Sebastian/Greene Street Extension Project \$30.3 million Improvement/ Extension.
- Trade, Exhibit and Event Center (TEE Center) - About 120,000 square feet. \$20 million in SPLOST funds.
- Laney-Walker/Bethlehem Redevelopment.
- Augusta Judicial Center & John H. Ruffin, Jr. Courthouse.
- Headquarters Library for the East Central Georgia Regional Library System.
- Augusta University, the new College of Dental Medicine building, a certified LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver building and recognized as 2011 Best Higher Education/Research project by ENR Southeast magazine, and the J. Harold Harrison, M.D. Education commons building held its groundbreaking November 28, 2012.

On August 18, 2015, Augusta-Richmond County Commission approved Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) with list of public projects. Many of the projects listed below (Table 13) are located in the DRA and include those listed in this plan. A few months later on November 3, 2015, the voters of Richmond County approved SPLOST 7.

Augusta Recreation, Parks & Facilities completed its Master Plan and on May 4, 2016, the Augusta Commission received an updated report from their consultants regarding the plan. The report presentation included recommendations derived from surveys, park inspections, stakeholder meetings, staff and other input. The Augusta Common (2.07 acres), within the DRA, has been identified as one of the parks earmarked for possible improvements and expansion. Improved signage for restroom locations, added security system and cameras, and a secondary exit for park administration are being considered. There are current discussions to expand the park both to the north toward the Levee and to the south toward Ellis Street.

Also located within the DRA are two contiguous city-owned properties located at 401 Walton Way and 406 Watkins Street. The City of Augusta has initiated plans to prepare this 6-acre site for redevelopment which may require demolition of the former jail property to attract private investment for a potential mixed-use retail development including market rate apartments.

Table 13: SPLOST VII Project List

SPLOST VII Project List					
Public Safety		\$ 45,500,000	General Government		\$ 11,000,000
	911			Information Technology	
	Fire Department			Administration	
	Fleet			Debt Service	
	Information Technology		Infrastructure and Facilities		\$ 122,650,000
				Road, Resurfacing, and Traffic	
	Sheriff			Stormwater	
	Marshal			Planning and Development	
Quality of Life		\$ 28,000,000		Government Facilities	
	Recreation and Parks			Municipal Building Complex	
	Administrator/Gateway Beautification			Public Facilities	
	Canal Authority			Economic Development	
	Coliseum Authority		Other Governments		
	Downtown Development Authority				
	Augusta Public Transit				
				Blythe	\$ 1,900,000
			Hephzibah	\$ 6,500,000	
Total			\$ 215,550,000		

Source: Augusta, GA, City Watch

These projects will reinvigorate DRA and surrounding neighborhoods. Other projects have been identified in different plans, all promoting urban redevelopment. The next chapter presents DRA with specific information obtained from these plans to help revolutionize downtown.

6 Additional Improvement Initiatives

Since the adoption of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Urban Redevelopment Plan, with the exception of the Augusta-Richmond County Target Area Master Plan, other plans have been crafted advancing their vision, goals and objectives. These plans include:

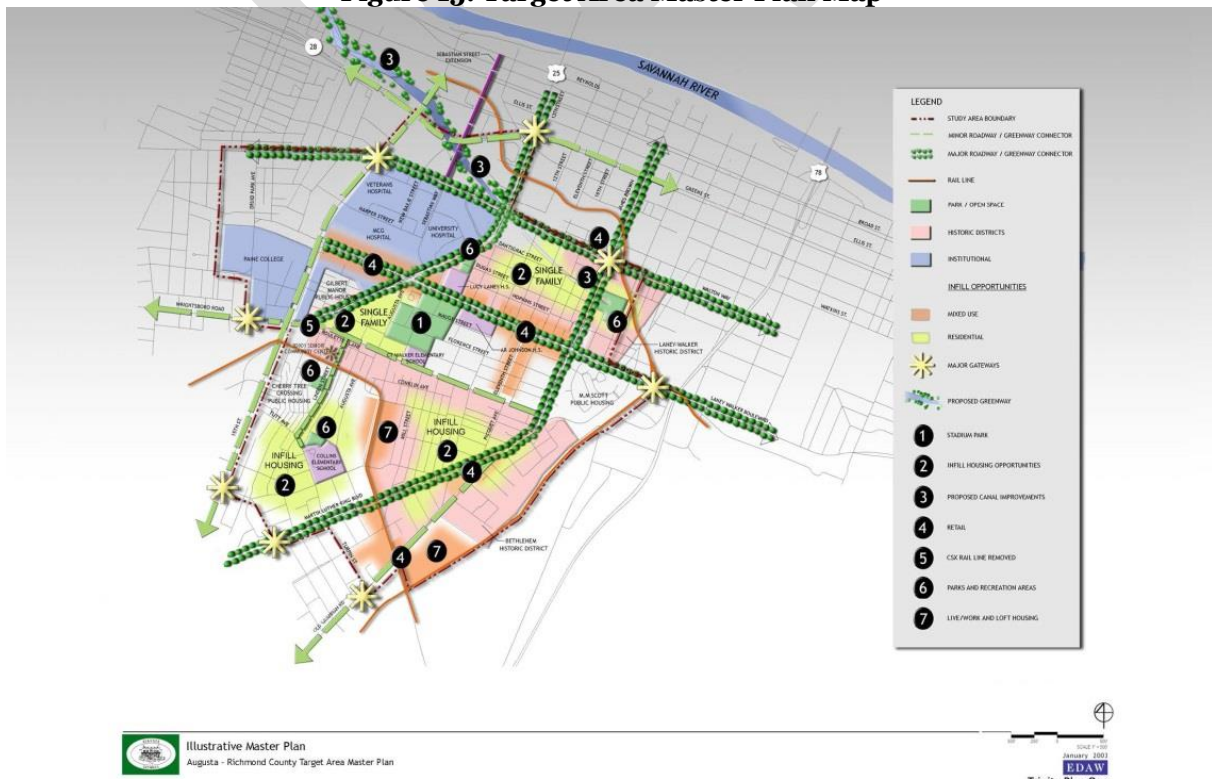
- Augusta-Richmond County Target Area Master Plan.
- The Westobou Vision: Augusta/North Augusta 2009 Master Plan.
- Revitalizing the Garden City: Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda 2010.
- Walkability and Age-Friendly Streets: Opportunities to Transform Augusta's Built Environment.
- Augusta Regional Transportation Study Long Range Transportation Plan 2040.

Each plan is described below, highlighting the downtown area.

6.1 Augusta-Richmond County Target Area Master Plan

Developed by EDAW/Trinity Plus One Consultants, this plan proposed the County government develop public-private partnerships with major employers including state and federal agencies, Augusta University, the Georgia Medical Center Authority, Paine College, the Augusta Housing Authority, the Richmond County Board of Education and others, to ensure redevelopment strategies succeed for close-in neighborhoods, the Central Business District and other nearby areas (*Figure 15*).

Figure 15: Target Area Master Plan Map



Projects proposed in the Target Area Master Plan lay the framework for future redevelopment in these areas. They include infill housing, mixed-use developments, with multi-family housing and retail, canal improvements, park and recreation areas, and the removal of CSX lines that run through the area. The plan recommends a major gateway at the intersection of 15th Street and Greene Street, while all other recommendations are outside the DRA.

6.2 The Westobou Vision: Augusta/North Augusta 2009 Master Plan

In 2009, the Augusta Commission and the North Augusta City Council endorsed this Master Plan to guide the economic development initiatives of both cities towards a sustainable future. The boundary of “The Westobou Vision” includes the traditional downtowns of North Augusta and Augusta and surrounding neighborhoods. Downtown and the Medical/Health Sciences District are the two primary focus areas in the plan. Augusta Tomorrow is working with stakeholders and government to help implement the plan.

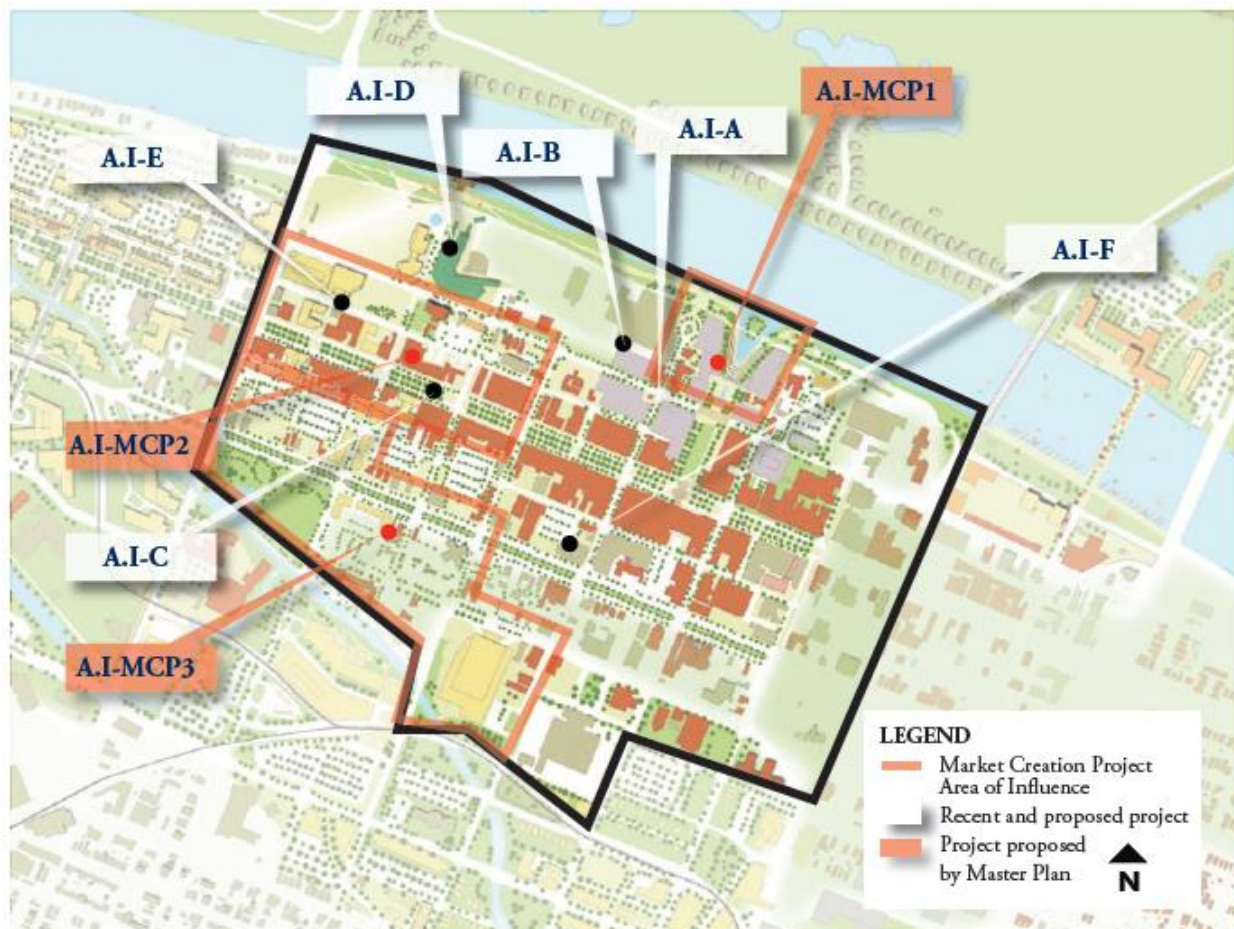
This plan updated an earlier City Center Master Plan produced by Augusta Tomorrow, an association of business and civic leaders whose mission is "To serve the community at large by planning, promoting, and implementing the development of Augusta with particular emphasis on the city center."

Figure 16: The Westobou Vision Map



In the plan, ICON Architecture defines the study area, looks at recent developments and summarizes both downtown attributes and obstacles to revitalization. It proposed redevelopment focus areas and potential strategies, initiatives, projects and next steps. Several of the findings in this plan were reported in the original Urban Downtown Redevelopment Plan.

The Westobou Vision: Augusta/North Augusta 2009 Master Plan recommends the following projects for the DRA.



- TEE Center (A.1-A) - A trade, exhibit, and event center at Reynolds and 9th Street.
- Proposed mid-rise hotel complex (A.I-B) - A proposed hotel complex is currently in the planning and permitting stages on Reynolds and 9th Street, adjacent the Augusta Common.
- The White's Building Reuse (A.I-C) - The conversion of the former J.B. White's Department Store to a new ground level retail mini mall and residential condominiums on the upper floors will contribute to the urban scene along Broad Street.
- The Westobou Arts Center (A.I-MCP1)
- Marbury Village (A.I-MCP2)
- Augusta Canal Park Neighborhood (A.I-MCP3)

6.3 Revitalizing the Garden City: Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda (ASDA) 2010

In 2010, this plan set the sustainable agenda for Augusta's future, establishing clear public investment priorities and attracted private participation. The Westobou Vision is referenced in this plan for downtown redevelopment potential.

This plan is a countywide urban design plan, dividing the County into three distinct areas: Urban, Suburban, and Rural. The document is a set of specific projects and policies, when implemented, will have a dramatic impact on the County and its people. Key goals are:

- Increasing economic activity and vitality,
- Protect and enhance the environment,
- Reinforce livable communities and neighborhoods and
- Create effective and attractive regional linkages.

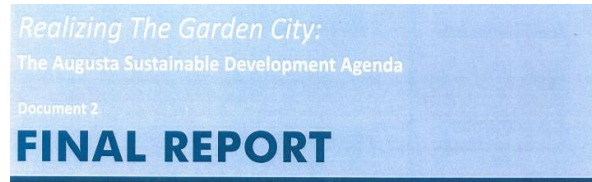
Specific objectives include strategic action corridors, site specific projects by type, and other initiatives.

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities Initiative provided \$75 million in grants nationwide based on "Livability Principles". The grant sought to:

- Revitalize Augusta's corridors through Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS).
- Designate overlay zoning districts for priority projects encouraging quality development.
- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design to create walkable communities.
- Improve owner and renter occupied housing.
- Link neighborhoods to schools and jobs, recreation and other community amenities.

The ASDA lists the following recommendations in DRA:

1. Designate areas for clustered development around major intersections and creating hamlets, villages, and neighborhoods with density and design guidelines.
2. Integrate greenways into subdivision design to increase quality of life.
3. Support downtown development.
4. Create the Augusta Civic Realty Trust, a private sector entity with critical financial capability and development skills that can serve as a "front end" catalyst for difficult projects.
5. Five-year implementation work plan.



October 14, 2010
 prepared for
 The City of Augusta, Georgia
 by
 SHoemaker LLC
 with
 Crutcher Engineering Group
 ICON Architecture Inc.
 The Woodruff Partnership
 Urban Partners



ASDA represents the County's first step into "new urbanism" and "smart growth." This initiative uses various smart growth principles and applies them to Richmond County. ASDA elements for the Redevelopment area include Augusta Way (15th Street), Westobou Trace, Riverwatch Parkway and Urban Neighborhood Revitalization.

Corridor Sustainability Improvements include:

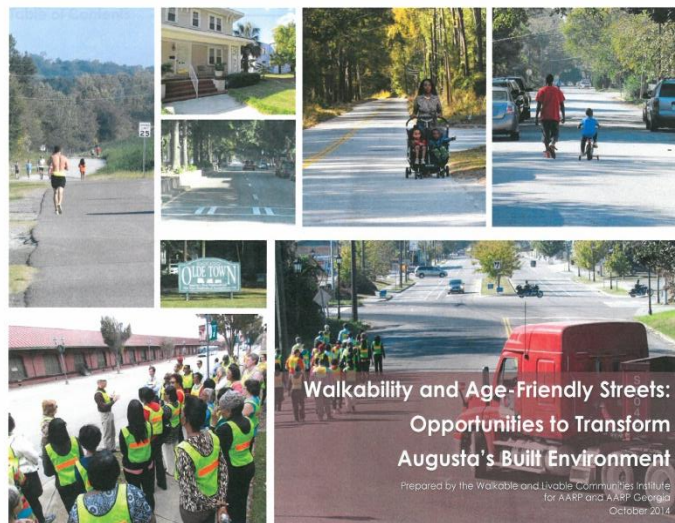
1. Augusta Way – 15th Street from downtown riverwalk to Rocky Creek through the Priority Development District. Three ASDA projects included are: Oates Creek Neighborhood Revitalization, Southgate Urban Village, and Rocky Creek Regional Mixed-Use.
2. Westobou Trace – Washington Road from Augusta National Golf Club through Broad Street and Sand Bar Ferry to I-520 and extending south to Doug Barnard Parkway ending at Tobacco Road. Projects include Upper Broad Street and Sand Bar Ferry Identity Gateway.
3. Riverwatch Parkway – Starting west of I-20 and continuing east to Green Street all the way to Seventh Street, includes the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area.
4. Urban Neighborhood Revitalization – Upper Broad Street and Historic Harrisburg – shopping at intersections, high-rise, market-rate residential condominium, mix of apartments, townhomes and renovated single-family residential.

6.4 Walkability and Age-Friendly Streets: Opportunities to Transform Augusta's Built Environment

The Walkable and Livable Community (WALC) Institute was hired by Georgia AARP to evaluate Augusta's built environment, focusing on walkability and livability, in regard to city's Age-Friendly Community designation. A draft report was prepared by the WALC Institute documenting livability and walkability in Augusta, focusing particularly on the Ole Towne neighborhood, Broad Street, Milledgeville Road and Bayvale Elementary School area.

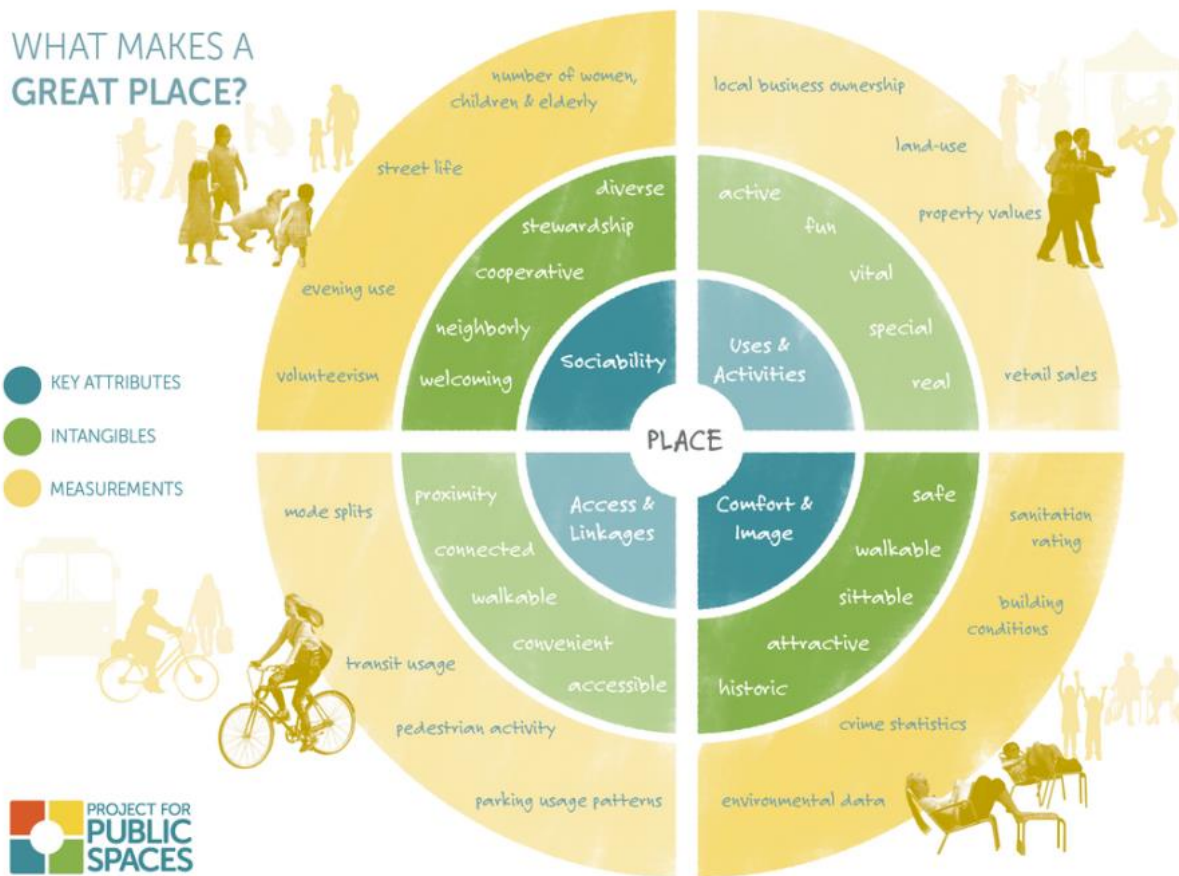
6.4.1 Age-Friendly Community - Active Living Workshop:

Welcome and Introductions were conducted by Karen Cooper, Associate State Director of Georgia AARP. Also introduced was then Mayor of Augusta Deke Copenhaver, Augusta Commissioner William (Bill) Lockett, WALC – Ian Lockwood and Kelly Morphy. The audience consisted of community stakeholders, members of AARP, senior citizens, retired college professors, church leaders, members of local community organizations, and government officials.



As part of the workshop, participants did a Walking Audit of a one-mile stretch of Broad Street from the Boathouse through the Old Towne neighborhood. Issues such as poor lighting, unsafe walking conditions, excessive wide streets, historic ambiance, heavy freight truck traffic, barriers, and trees in the “public realm”, new building design, and access to riverfront were identified as key factors that must be addressed to make Augusta even more livable.

1. Livability and Accessibility – Access to all modes of travel including pedestrian, biking and public transit.
2. Complete Streets – adapt streets so that they are safe, accessible and provide mobility for all users, not only vehicles.
3. Place Making – creating places that people find user friendly, safe, and provide a focal point for community events.
4. Traffic Safety – safe streets and places.



This report is focused on enhancing walkability and livability in Augusta. Recommendations by WALC and the AARP’s Livable Communities are important informational sources, along with the toolkit provided in the WALC report appendix. Some of the suggested recommendations are

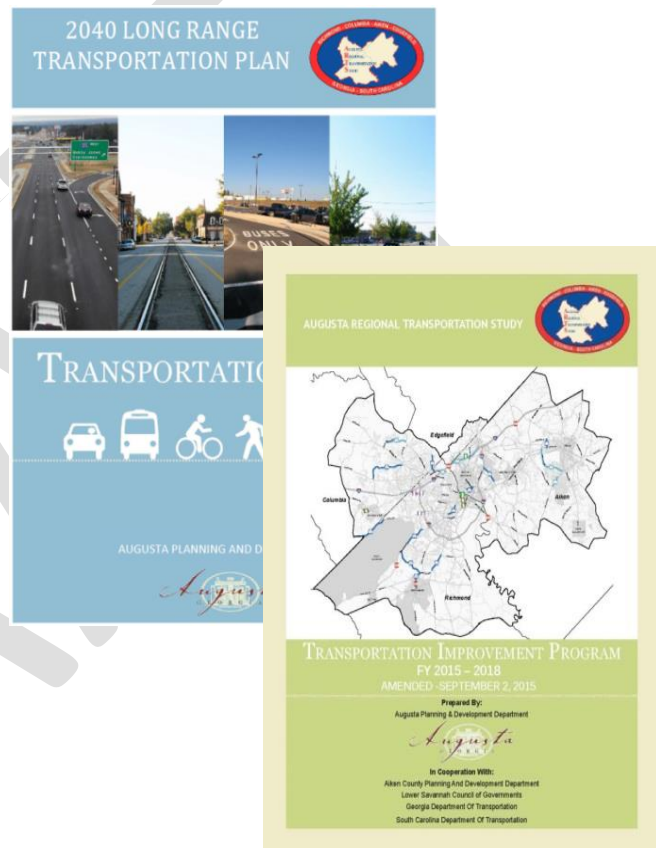
relatively easy to implement. They provide a strong sense of community awareness and focus on infrastructure improvements that will serve residents throughout their life.

There are existing areas in Augusta where some of the recommendations are already in place and/or being implemented, which will enhance walkability and livability, and can be extended to revitalize other areas.

6.5 Augusta Regional Transportation Study Long Range Transportation Plan 2040

The regional Metropolitan Planning Organization adopted its 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan in September 2015. The plan was created through an extensive public participation process that included a strong support for pedestrian and bicycle improvements throughout the region. The plan is currently implemented through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This includes a list of bicycle and pedestrian projects, such as:

- 15th Street Bike Lane from John C Calhoun Expressway to Broad Street
- 5th Street Shared lane marking from Broad Street to 5th Street
- 5th Street Bridge Multiuse Path from Riverwalk Marina to Jefferson Davis Highway
- 4th Street Shared lane markings from Laney Walker Boulevard to Broad Street
- \$15,000,000 lump sum for Georgia portion of MPO for bicycle and pedestrian projects



TIP projects in DRA include:

- Broad Street Improvements (Washington Road to Sand Bar Ferry Road)
- Broad Street over Hawks Gully (Bridge Repair and Restoration)
- Greene Street Improvements from 13th Street to East Boundary Street
- Riverwatch Parkway (15th Street to County Line)
- SR 4 / 15th Street Pedestrian Improvements – Calhoun Expressway. to Central Avenue
- Telfair Street Improvements (15th Street to East Boundary Street)
- 5th Street - Laney Walker Boulevard to Reynolds Street
- 5th Street Bridge (Bridge Repair and Restoration)

- James Brown Boulevard Reconstruction
- 6th Street (Laney Walker Boulevard to Reynolds Street)
- 15th Street over Augusta Canal (Bridge Repair and Restoration)
- 13th Street (RA Dent to Reynolds Street)
- 11th Street over the Augusta Canal (Bridge Repair and Restoration)

All the plans presented in this update are implemented through public and private development along with the appropriate zoning and land use regulations explained in the next chapter.

7 Zoning & Land Use Compatibility

The downtown redevelopment plan consists of six distinct areas totaling approximately 34.96 acres (Municipal Building Complex - 6.46 acres; Old Library Complex – 1.4 acres; Depot Site - 6.27 acres; 600 Broad Street - 0.30 acres; Coliseum Complex - 19.23 acres; Port Royal Site - 1.30 acres) classified for zoning and land use as described in the Augusta-Richmond County 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The following are measures described to address the subareas of the downtown and ideas and/or best practices to assist stakeholders with making downtown Augusta a great to live, work, and play. The concepts provided were provided to offer possible solutions.

7.1 Place Making

To expand on the previously mentioned draft report prepared by the WALC Institute documenting livability and walkability in Augusta, “*place making*” is among other “key factors that must be addressed to make Augusta even more livable.” Various communities have achieved success at restoring historic functions of main streets thereby impacting the entire downtown using “organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring,” according to a Project for Public Spaces (PPS) article, “Placemaking Main Street into a Destination Downtown.” Elements that serve to create a better sense of place are evident in downtown communities that are well connected, sustainable, and socioeconomically healthy.

The built natural environments are areas that do not have problems with attracting people such as the Augusta Common for special events and the levee to provide Riverwalk activities including hotels, museums, restaurants, and convention center. They are also opportunities to evaluate underperforming pedestrian ways that have various links to Broad Street and other areas within the downtown. By identifying Downtown Augusta’s assets, community stakeholders can identify liabilities that keep certain corridors from being developed. Being equipped with information such as travel patterns, cyclists, pedestrian and vehicular counts will point toward solutions of connectivity thereby expanding access points and distributing pedestrian flow in other areas of the downtown. The PPS article addressed this note of attracting people by providing lots of things to do through identifying the “highest opportunity places” and figuring out “how to make substantive physical and social connections between existing places, how to strategically create new places, and how to harness the energy that can be generated through building a network of destinations.”

Great streets are considered public spaces and are recognized for the value they provide. As mentioned earlier within the Age-Friendly Community – Active Living Workshop section, a Walking Audit was done to gather information concerning issues that affect Broad Street for example. The issues noted are the same issues pedestrians notice on a daily basis. The PPS article recommended, “Walking and street audits can also be conducted to diagnose places along Main Street and create a wish list of desired future change.” By conducting these walking audits on a consistent basis, community stakeholders can be unified in identifying possible visible solutions of what appropriate changes to the “street, sidewalk, or building wall” can look like. The pictures below depict an example of what the Walkable and Livable Community (WALC) Institute identified as a possible transformation that can take place when envisioning tools are used to reflect a more pedestrian-friendly community, slower car speeds, and an improved sense of place.



The Present — Photo by the WALC Institute



The Possibilities — Photovision by the WALC Institute and TDC Design Studio

By treating streets as public spaces, more attributes of what makes a street great can be recognized by all those that use the street to connect to other great places within the downtown and beyond. By linking communities for ease of travel for all travelers and their chosen modes of transportation, public streets are not only “Complete Streets,” but also “Great Streets” because of the capacity to build livable “communities of all sizes together.”

Creating great gathering places while advancing local economies are historical ways downtowns



and cities have grown with centers of commerce. Transportation investments help to support this broader vision of streets. The way people use the downtown is for engaging economic, social, and cultural reasons that change over time that also allow new urban design elements and new land use experiences that contribute toward making places enjoyable and with favorable memories.

A possible area that can be looked at closer with respect to travel investments and converting streets into public spaces is working to implement gateway and beautification standards along

with sidewalk improvements. These beautification improvements include landscaping, wayfinding signage, public art and visitor product development. These and other improvements to the sidewalk convey a message of welcome on the part of Augusta-Richmond County. Public and private partners work together on this initiative to maintain landscaped areas through a contract with the City. The closest gateways to downtown Augusta are those that are located along the Savannah River and the South Carolina border including the 13th Street, 5th Street, and Gordon Hwy corridors. Recommended initiatives to establish great streets as public spaces as identified by the PPS article include street designs for appropriate speeds and community plans that incorporates envisioned places they want to support.

“Designing road projects to fit community contexts can help increase developable land, create open space, and reconnect communities to their neighbors, a waterfront, or a park.” – Project for Public Spaces Article

Beyond having access to downtown, connections also describe the need to communicate to established and newer residents, employees and visitors that receive and respond to information about certain amenities the downtown offers. Interactive abilities through the use of the latest Internet technologies allow the most cost effective way of reaching the most people. Self-guided walking tours, special events, and dedicated downtown development staff are examples of opportunities to attract people and promote the downtown brand to a diverse number of users including locals and visitors alike.

Parks, green spaces, entertainment, and recreation facilities are significant pockets where people gather or access Downtown Augusta. The bike and pedestrian path along the Augusta Canal and the Savannah River are a few of the major downtown sites of everyday leisure and enjoyment. Local character in downtown offers opportunities to explore meaningful urban landscape that undergird the creation of place making. Times Square in New York City evolved and grew to its current capacity of more than 300,000 pedestrians each day partly because of locals interested in coming to watch people. While Augusta cannot be compared to New York’s size and population numbers, the environment in which creativity is cultivated and encouraged can be analyzed to establish creative expression that reveals how people interact with urban design and the built environment.



The next question of concern when discussing the attraction of people to the downtown is, “Where are people going to park?” The next session covers this issue by providing a bit of history, showing how other cities addressed it, and covering a public transit idea.

7.2 Parking

In a 2005 Parking Study authorized by Downtown Development Authority and conducted by Carl Walker Parking Consultants, there are a total of 13,942 parking spaces in downtown, east of 13th



street. This analysis was based on a block-by-block inventory of on-street and off-street parking. The study also states that only 51% of total on-street parking was occupied while 37% total off-street parking was occupied. On-street parking is heavily used because it provides the most convenience, this is why it is the city's most valuable parking asset. Furthermore, it is not strictly regulated.

In 2014, the Downtown Development Authority hired Robinson Management Consulting to conduct another study of downtown parking. They also concluded downtown parking is not strictly regulated as appropriate resources are not allocated to do so. Some people park in excess of 6-7 hours in 2-hour parking zones, knowing overstay fines are maxed at \$20. Downtown Development Authority has proposed a parking management plan for downtown. The plan seeks to implement the following:

- State-of-the-art on-street parking meter system in Broad Street Corridor generally defined as the areas between 5th street to 13th street bounded by Reynolds Street to the north and Ellis Street to the south.
- Enforcement will be Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., excluding federal holidays.
- Fees will be \$1.00 per hour with 2-hour limit for all parallel parking spaces and 4-hour limit in median areas along Broad street.
- Residential permits will be issued for on-street parking for certain evening hours and overnight.
- Long-term monthly parking options will be made available for downtown employees and regular commuters.
- All proceeds from program will go towards improving downtown signage, streets, alleys, sidewalks, street lighting, and landscaping.
- Program is funded through private sector investment; the associated parking meters and required capital will not be funded by the tax payer.

This plan was done with the public through community forums held at the August Public Library and Marbury Center on December 9, 2014. Other suggestions made by the consultants and public audience include:

- Enforce current time limits
- Leverage Richmond County Board of Education and Augusta Marriott parking decks.
- Building a parking deck off of Broad Street (possible with SPLOST infrastructure funding).

- Conduct a public awareness campaign to educate the public on the program.

Cities like Decatur, Savannah, and Atlanta do a combination of education, enforcement and metered parking for their urban core areas. Rome Downtown Development Authority in Rome, Georgia is the parking authority for the city's downtown parking services, with their own fine structure for each subsequent offense and varying circumstances. They have recently launched a "we validate" campaign to increase parking options in downtown.

7.2.1 Downtown Parking Best Practices

American Planning Association published a Planning Service Advisory Essential Information Package (EIP) titled Parking Solutions, documenting best parking practices across America. This EIP covers important parking issues including:

- Parking Management
- Shared Parking
- Parking In-Lieu Fees
- Parking Requirement Reduction and Exemptions
- Downtown District Special Parking Requirements
- Green Parking Lot Design
- Permeable Pavement
- Bicycle Parking



Cities across America regular parking through a combination of regulations, administration, and enforcement. Downtown Scottsdale, Arizona institutes parking in-lieu fees, underground parking structures and shared parking, while cities like Austin, Texas reduces – and sometimes – exempts parking requirements in downtown. Downtown Augusta is currently a combination of on and off-street parking, parking lots and decks, all regulated by the County Zoning Ordinance enforcing strict parking requirements based on use. Proper downtown redevelopment occurs when parking evolves through a combination of strategies as recommended by EIP.

Augusta Planning and Development Department staff recently studied parking practices in six major cities in the southeast. These cities include:

- Columbia and Greenville, SC
- Greensborough and Winston-Salem, NC
- Nashville and Chattanooga, TN

All these cities have an ordinance that completely exempt off-street parking requirements for development in their Central Business District/Downtown. Historic sites and structures along with their rehabilitation and reuse are equally exempt. This exemption is extended to their

overlay practices which do not incorporate any additional parking requirements. These major cities also incorporate strict enforcement of parking violations, metered parking, shared and timed parking, and other effective parking management practices, making exemptions feasible in their zoning ordinance.

Exempting parking requirements in downtown Augusta is not possible due to following factors:

- Augusta Zoning Ordinance sets strict parking requirements for all uses, including those in Central Business District.²
- Downtown residents, employees and business owners want strict enforcement and/or dedicated parking for themselves.
- Bicycle parking – Section 4-8-4 was recently added, including short and long term space requirements.

Exempting parking requirements may result in increasing a demand that is perceived to have already been overwhelmed by the limited supply.

7.2.2 Future of DRA Parking

Downtown Development Authority continues to address parking in the DRA focusing on management and enforcement. Their efforts have lead others to publicly voice their recommendations for parking in DRA. In an Augusta Chronicle article following the December 9, 2014 public meeting, Mr. Bryan Haltermann, president of Haltermann Partners Inc. Downtown Developers, reflected the public's support for strict enforcement of the city's two-hour parking ordinance. "If the two-hour limit was enforced, downtown would have the beginning of a parking management plan"³. The city must take a more active role in parking enforcement.

Some municipalities seeking to eliminate parking requirements do so by introducing alternatives to effectively manage on and off-street parking demand, such as:

- On-street time limits. On-street time limits or parking meters (with revenue devoted to downtown improvements) are effective tools to prioritize the most attractive curb spaces for customers, and ensure that these are not occupied by all-day employee parking.
- Residential permit parking zones. Residential permit parking controls prioritize curb spaces for residents in neighborhoods. Rather than having separate parking for each development, all uses share a common pool. This can be passed into law in lieu of other requirements.

² Section 4-3(c)

³ Haltermann, Bryan "The way forward on downtown parking is clear, and twofold", Augusta Chronicle, December 16, 2014

- In lieu parking fees. The city can charge and collect a transportation impact fee in lieu of requiring developers to provide off-street parking on site. The fees can be used to build shared public off-street parking or for other transportation improvements.

Solutions like parking meters and residential permit parking zones have been debated in Augusta before and part of Downtown Development Authority's Parking Management Plan. However, such administration and enforcement have not been realized in Augusta. If the city seeks to eliminate parking requirements in downtown, the city must adopt and institute its own Parking Management Plan and commit appropriate resources to implement it.

7.2.3 A Downtown Circulator

Several cities have sought to provide solutions to parking shortages within downtowns or downtown sub-areas such as Rochester, NY; Raleigh, NC; Chattanooga, TN; and Downtown Bethesda, MD. One promising recommendation is the implementation of a "shuttle" or "circulator" to connect underutilized and new parking facilities within and adjacent to downtown with major downtown destinations. The circulator would also help to balance out the existing supply, while improving overall downtown utilization. This could address developer and business tenant concerns about parking as well.

Reducing traffic congestion and emissions would assist the city with any "environmental sustainability initiatives" according to the City of Rochester Center City Circulator Study. By maximizing the use of the existing parking supply and changing consumer behavior with reduced vehicle trips within the downtown, the circulator could contribute to promote economic development. By conducting a feasibility study identification of the following can be made:

- Best Practices
- Unique Goals
- Operating Costs
- Frequency Possibilities
- Funding Options
- Bike/Walk Incentives



Specific areas within the DRA can benefit from a circulator to provide a convenient and sustainable way to move daily commuters, tourists, and visitors within the downtown efficiently, economically, and safely. Attention to certain areas within downtowns can also be done with consistent land use plans and the use of overlay districts as a tool to address alternative land development requirements and manage development in particular areas.

7.3 Land Use Compatibility

Current and future plans for the DRA conform to the mix of uses described in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Land Use chapter. Appropriate land uses are consistent with recommended development patterns, including:

- Low-Density Residential
- High-Density Residential
- Professional Office
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public Institutions
- Transportation, Communications, and Utilities
- Parks, Recreation, and Conservation
- Mixed Use

In addition, the DRA boundaries fall within one of the relatively new character areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Each of the proposed uses is based on special characteristics Augusta's elected officials and citizens have found are important to preserve or enhance downtown. Its challenging development patterns and issues require special attention.

The area's character is in the proposed Augusta DRA and its current land uses are described in the Preliminary Character Areas in Augusta, as follows:

Downtown Augusta is where the city was founded and first developed. Downtown has the major characteristics of a traditional central business district; including a wide variety of land uses (retail, office, cultural, entertainment, financial, government, open space, industrial and institutional), high level of access for vehicles, pedestrians and transit, a mix of architectural styles, medium to high density residential development, and commercial buildings with no front or side setbacks.

Over two dozen downtown properties are listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places. Much of downtown is within the boundaries of a National Register Historic District and/or a local historic district. Downtown Augusta borders the Savannah River and is bisected by part of the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area.

7.4 Existing Zoning Districts and Overlays

DRA projects conform to all zoning classifications for downtown Augusta's central business district and the riverfront as described in the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The zoning districts are compatible with the DRA, which include:

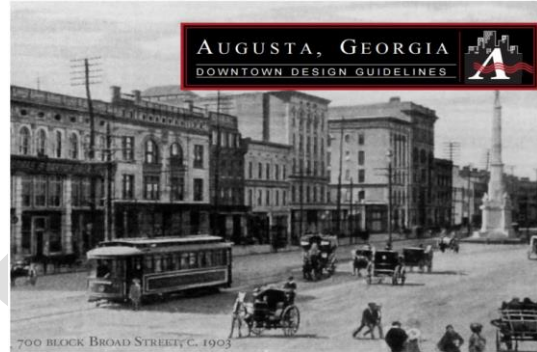
- Residential Districts
- Professional Districts

- Business Districts
- Industrial Districts
- Special Districts, including Planned Development Riverfront
- Savannah River Corridor Protection District

DRA is subject to the County zoning ordinance and Downtown Design Guidelines. Information from both regulations is incorporated into staff reports presented to Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Commission, for their recommendations to the Augusta-Richmond County Commission.

7.5 Downtown Design Guidelines

Downtown Augusta physical characteristics are also governed by Downtown Design Guidelines. It subjects properties in local historic district to design review when changes are proposed to the building exterior. The Downtown Design Guidelines provide variety of design options. The following are some of the physical characteristics regulated by Downtown Design Guidelines.



The downtown district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This allows property owners to apply for federal tax credits for rehabilitation and local tax abatement. The Design Guideline is used to help preserve DRA's physical history in regards to the following elements (Table 14).

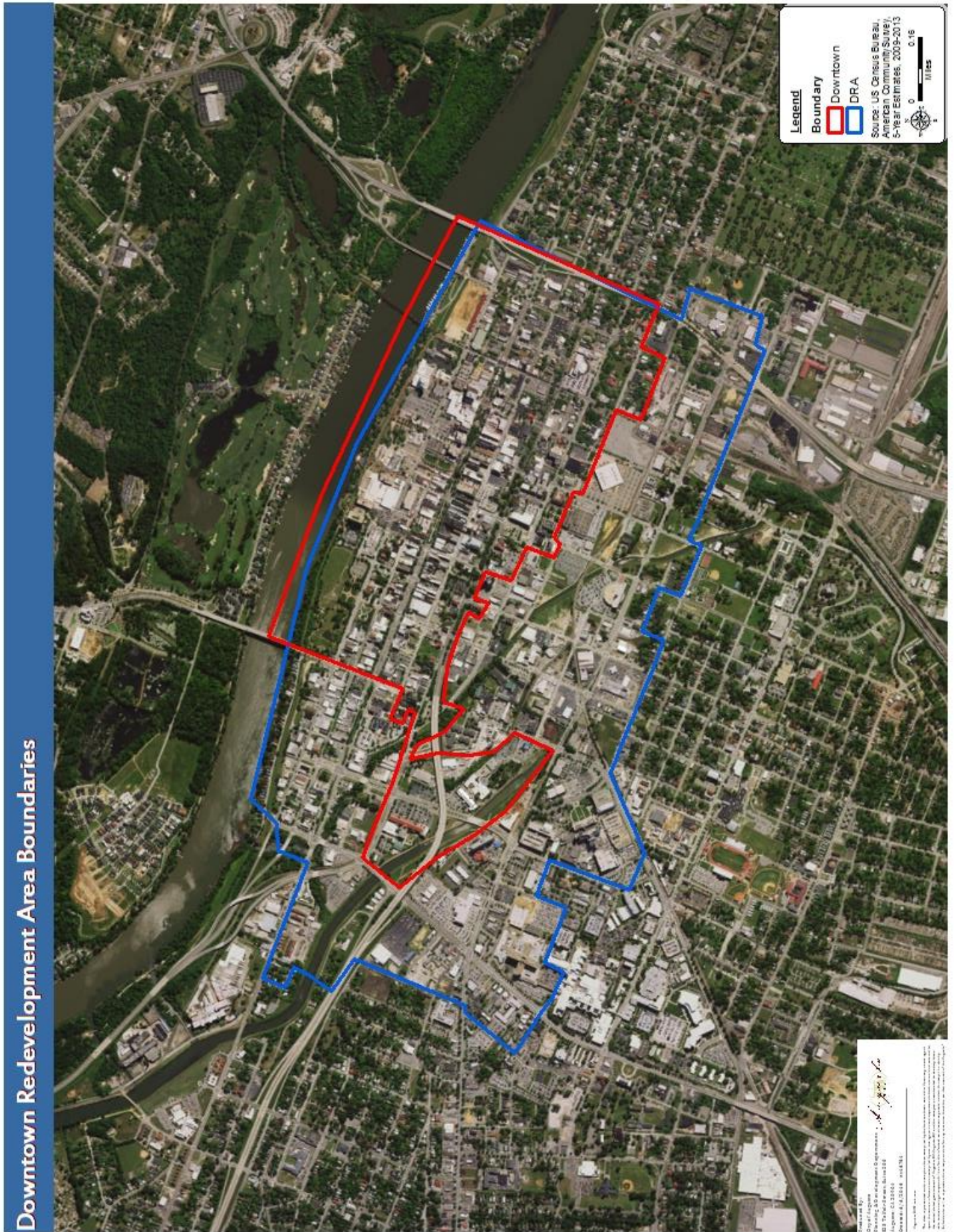
Table 14: Downtown Design Guidelines

Design Guideline Elements				
Building Forms and Types	Complexity of Form	Site Behind Building	Placement	Orientation
Architectural Styles	Directional Expression	Rears of Buildings	Sign Sizes	Height, Width and Scale
Building Materials and Sizes	Roof Form and Material	Architectural Details and Decoration	Lettering Styles	Traffic Signals and Utilities
Setback	Character-Defining Elements	Doors and Porches	Lettering Size	Public Signs
Spacing and Orientation	Doors and Windows	Roof and Cornice	Fountains, Sculpture and Public Art	Street Trees and Landscaping
Parking Lots	Porches and Balconies	Site Lighting	Lighting	Paving and Curbs
Driveways	Storefronts	Mothballing	Maintenance	Street Furniture

Colors	Foundation	Additions	Types	Street Lights
Fences and Walls	Cornices	Synthetic Siding	Massing	Awning Signs
Undeveloped Lots	Materials and Textures	Paint Preparation	Materials	Parks and Open Space

Downtown Design Guidelines is limited to a specific boundary within the DRA. Figure 17 shows where the guidelines are implemented in relationship to the redevelopment area.

Figure 17: DRA Boundaries



7.6 Overlay District

Section 25-E of Augusta-Richmond County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance regulates Overlay Zoning practices.

Overlay zoning is an established method of creating special zoning districts placed over existing base zoning. The purpose of overlay zoning is to provide additional protection and/or guidance for specific areas through regulations and/or incentives that are applied in addition to the base zoning requirements.

Overlay districts are tools for implementing plans by protecting critical areas like groundwater recharge, floodplains, or prime farmland. They are also used to protect neighborhood character, commercial districts, and corridors. They guide development more carefully than base zoning by identifying future urban zones and mixed use areas, and they protect critical impact zones such as airports from encroachment.

Overlay districts are implemented through zoning text and map amendments. They are added to section 25-E. Specific criteria must be met in order to craft a “Downtown Overlay District”. These criteria include:

- a) The area must be of contiguous geography and it must be characterized by some significant common element, be it environmental sensitivity, period of development, neighborhood character, future development potential, or something similar; and
- b) The full text of the proposed additional requirements for the proposed overlay district must be provided at the time of the application for designation. Such additional requirements must be reasonable to facilitate the intent and purpose of the designation as well as the goals, objectives, intent and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan and other pertinent plans adopted by the City of Augusta.; and
- c) The benefits of the proposed additional regulations to the public health, safety, and welfare shall be sufficiently documented to clearly indicate that they are more significant than the sum of potential effects.

The Laney Walker/Bethlehem Neighborhood, overlay district “W4” was adopted July 2011. This overlay district applies only use restrictions in the neighborhood, atop standard zoning district regulations. In order to craft a thorough Downtown Overlay District, the public must be actively engaged to help determine its boundaries and regulations to ensure no detrimental impacts are resulting due to the designation.

7.7 The Levee

The levee serves as a critical natural barrier for the Savannah River and is an integral part of Downtown. The Levee serves as a riverwalk for pedestrians and tourists. It extends from 10th street in Downtown Augusta to Lock and Dam Park, south of Phinizy Swamp Natural Park. The Levee height ranges from 20' at Lock and Dam Park to 35' in Downtown Augusta. Buildings range from mid to high rise.

Figure 18: Riverwalk Downtown Augusta



The U.S. Army Core of Engineers constructed the levee to protect the Savannah River from flooding the DRA. It has become a scenic riverwalk connecting people and buildings to the river. This man-made environmental barrier is an asset to downtown redevelopment. The illustration below shows how developers can use it to link their development to the Savannah River.

Figure 19: Minimum Height and Setback



Source: Augusta Planning and Development Department

Augusta Engineering Department strongly recommends new buildings be constructed 15' minimum setback away from the levee and is supported by independent foundations. This is required for emergency response, flood management, utility service and erosion control. All buildings must be built three (3') above base flood elevation and in accordance with the Flood Damage Ordinance. Retaining walls are permitted; they must allow sufficient drainage through weep holes and meet soil erosion and sediment control regulations. Parking decks are permitted and can rise to the height of the levee (35' or 3 decks) prior to other uses built atop it. There is currently no maximum building height. These regulations are reflected in the Zoning Ordinance.

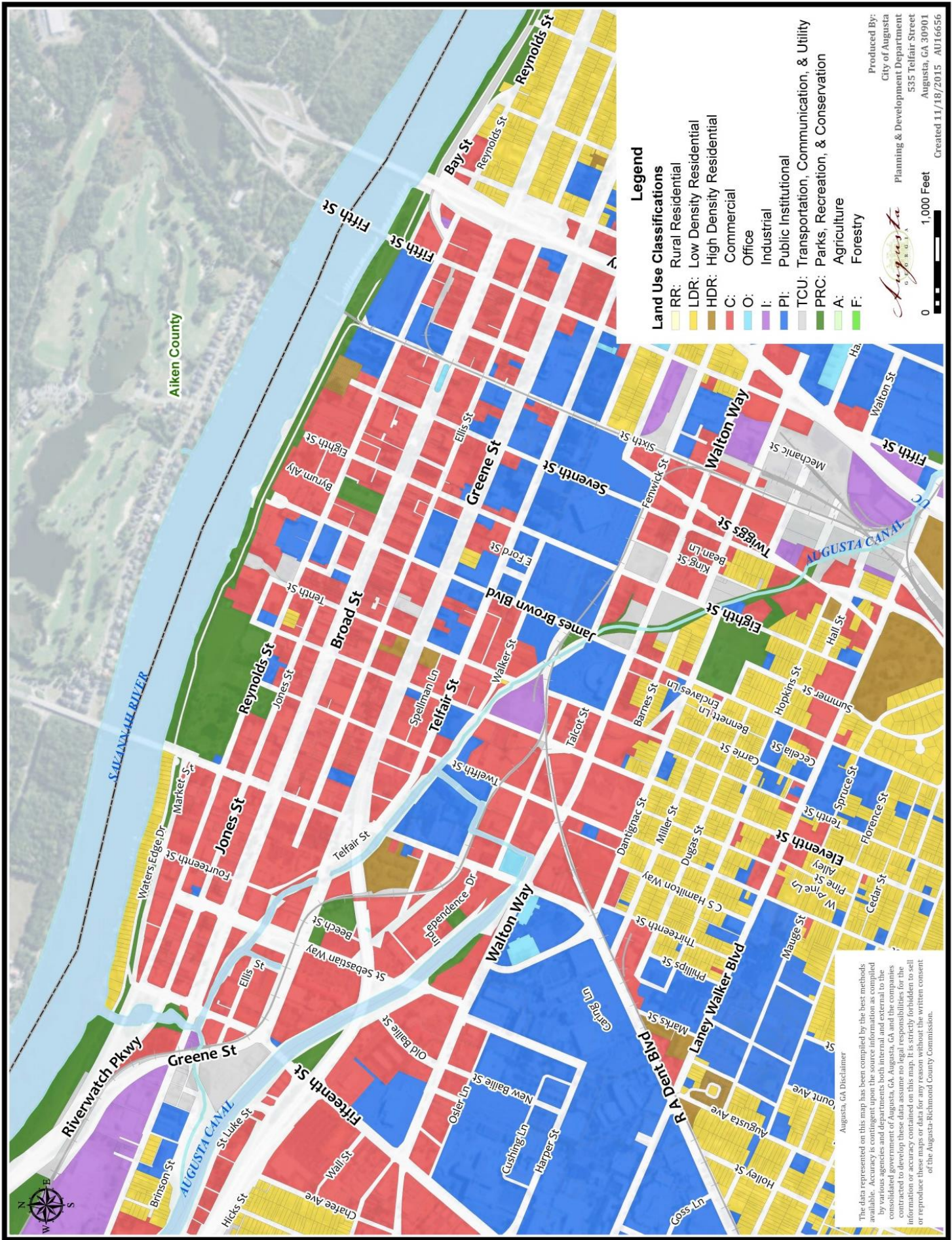
8 Future of DRA

The DRA has the perfect opportunity to be revitalized even further. The public has recently been engaged during the Downtown Concept Plan conducted by Cooper and Carry Architect firm. They are addressing downtown streets and traffic improvements, landscape, trees, lighting, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, public art, and other issues, in an effort to define the area's "Public Realm". These conceptual improvements set the stage, possibly, for new zoning codes in Augusta and meet all three above-mentioned criteria required for Overlay Districts in Augusta.

Appendix A. Maps

Downtown Land Use Map
Future Development Map
Primary Character Area Map
Richmond County Land Use Map
Tax Allocation District (TAD) 4

DRAFT



Future Development Map

Future Development Patterns

Legend

- Gateway Corridors
- Minor Commercial Nodes
- Major Commercial Nodes
- Major Roads
- Interstate
- Protected Corridors
- Commercial Corridor
- Regional Center Areas
- Areas in Need of Redevelopment

Development Patterns

- CAG - Conservation Area & GreenSpace
- CBD - Central Business District
- I - Industrial
- RDA - Rural Development Area
- SDA - Suburban Development Area
- TN - Traditional Neighborhood

1. Augusta Exchange



2. Doctors Hospital



3. Augusta Mall Area



7. Fort Gordon Area



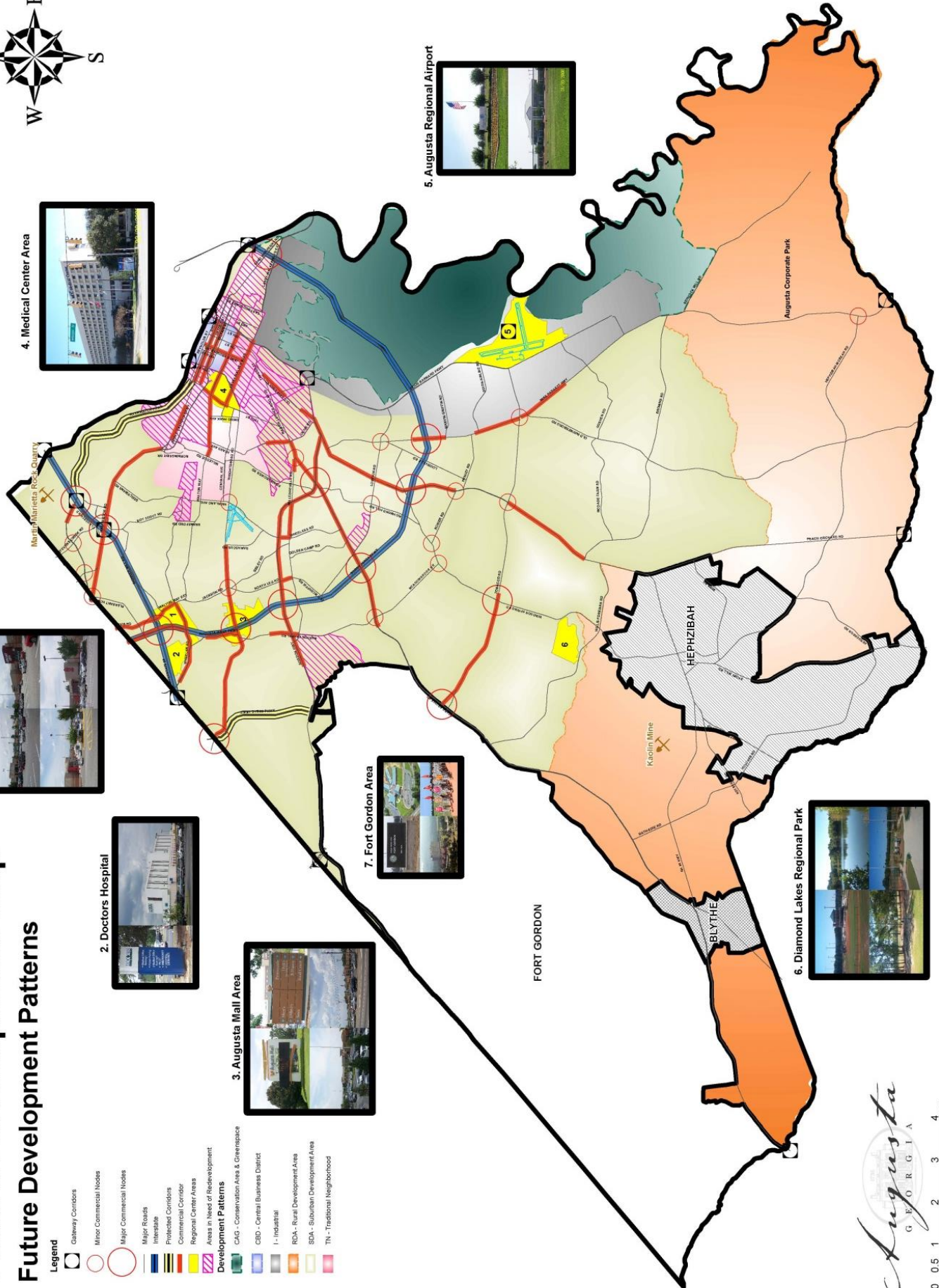
4. Medical Center Area



5. Augusta Regional Airport



6. Diamond Lakes Regional Park



0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

PRELIMINARY CHARACTER AREAS



0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles



Projection: StatePlane
Zone: 3051
Units: Feet

Legend

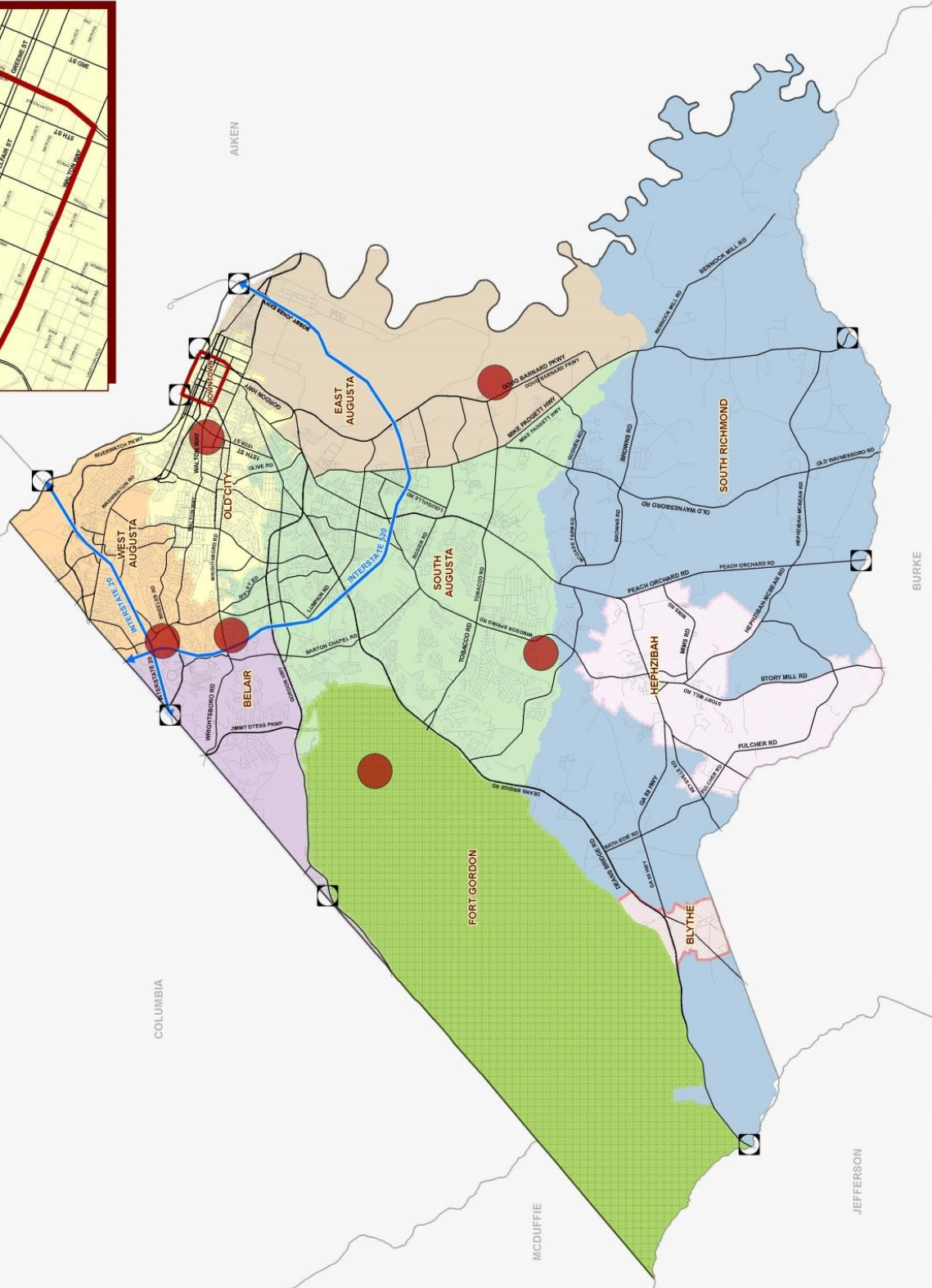
- GATEWAY CORRIDOR
- REGIONAL CENTER
- MAJOR ROADS
- AUGUSTA
- BELAIR
- BLYTHE
- DOWNTOWN
- EAST AUGUSTA
- FORT GORDON
- HEPHZIBAH
- OLD CITY
- SOUTH AUGUSTA
- SOUTH RICHMOND
- WEST AUGUSTA

Augusta, GA Disclaimer

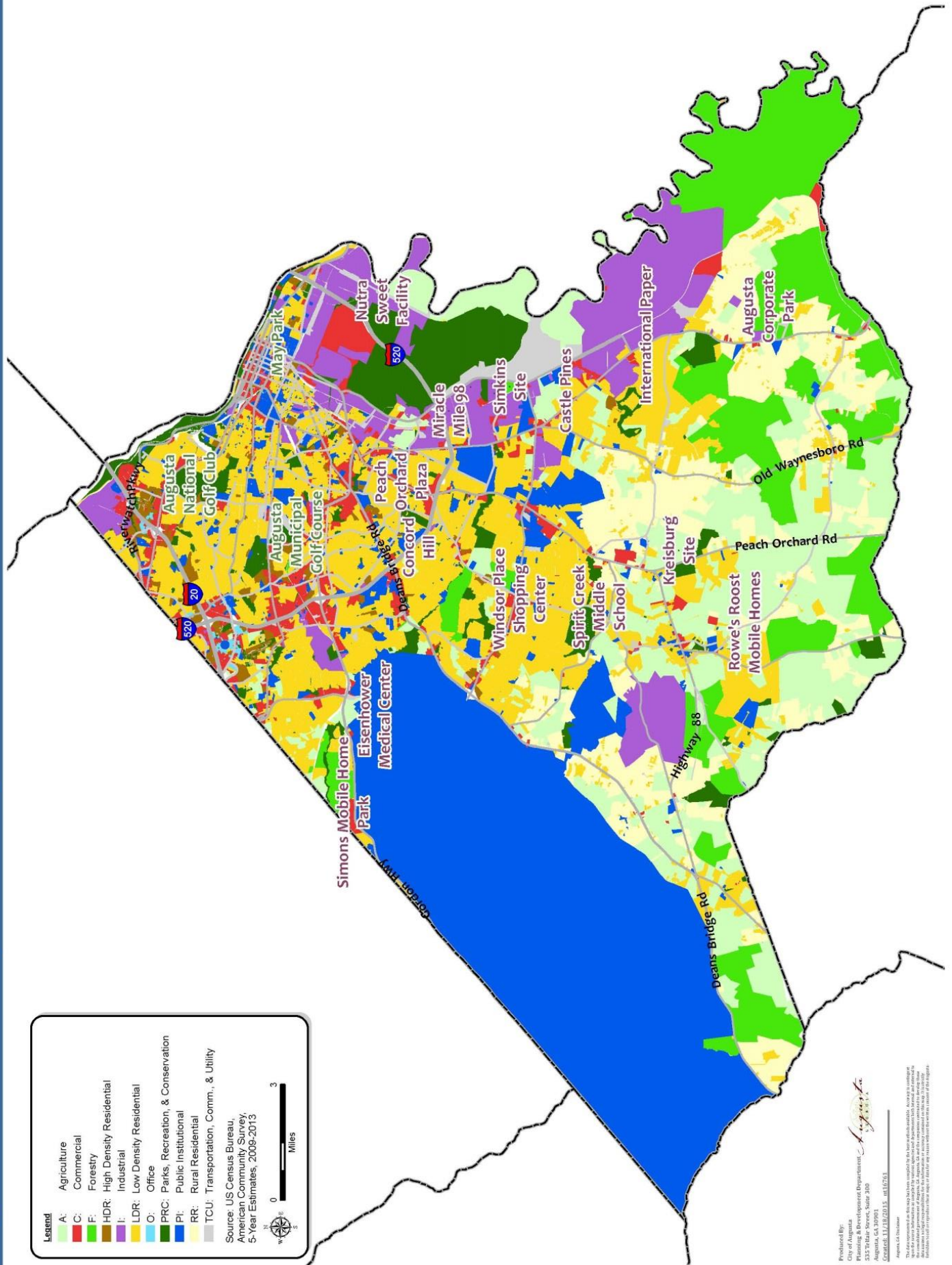
The data represented on this map has been compiled by the best methods available. Accuracy is contingent upon the source information as compiled by various agencies and departments both internal and external to the consolidated government of Augusta, GA. Augusta, GA and the companies contracted to develop these data assume no legal responsibilities for the information or accuracy contained on this map. It is strictly forbidden to sell or reproduce these maps or data for any reason without the written consent of the Augusta-Richmond County Commission.



Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission
525 Telfair Street
Augusta, GA 30901
www.augustaga.gov
December 2007



Augusta-Richmond County Land Use Map



Produced By:
City of Augusta
Planning & Development Department
333 Troy Ave., Suite 200
Augusta, GA 30901
Created: 11/18/2015, at 15:21

Augusta

This data represents the best available information for the City of Augusta. It is not a guarantee of accuracy. The City of Augusta is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this data. The City of Augusta is not responsible for any damages or losses resulting from the use of this data.

[illegible]

Appendix B. Augusta Mayor and Commission

Mayor Hardie Davis, Jr.

Augusta-Richmond County Commission:

District 1 - William Fennoy

District 2 - Dennis Williams

District 3 - Mary Davis

District 4 - Sammie Sias

District 5 - Bill Lockett

District 6 - Ben Hasan

District 7 - Sean Frantom

District 8 - Wayne Guilfoyle

District 9 - Marion Williams

District 10 - Grady Smith

Appendix C. References and Resources

Augusta-Richmond County Board of Assessors and Tax Commissioner's offices

Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission. Augusta-Richmond County Comprehensive Plan 2008. <http://www.augustaga.gov/319/Comprehensive-Plan>

Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission. Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance of (Amended August 2015) <http://www.augustaga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6091>

Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission. Various maps and plans: <http://www.augustaga.gov/524/Maps>

Georgia Department of Revenue, <http://dor.georgia.gov/>

Appendix D. Tax Parcel ID Numbers

Municipal Building Complex

047-1-259-00-0	4.54
047-1-260-00-0	0.23
047-1-261-00-0	0.12
047-1-262-00-0	0.13
047-1-263-00-0	0.27
047-1-265-00-0	0.41
047-1-266-00-0	0.22
047-1-267-00-0	0.45
047-1-268-00-0	0.30

Coliseum Complex

047-1-291-00-0	1.26
047-1-292-00-0	1.20
047-1-300-02-0	10.16
047-1-301-00-0	5.14
047-3-019-00-0	0.11
047-3-020-00-0	0.38
047-3-020-01-0	0.06
047-3-021-00-0	0.50
047-3-022-00-0	0.42

Old Library Complex

047-1-192-00-0	0.06
047-1-193-00-0	0.22
04 7-1-194-00-0	1.12

Depot Site

047-2-003-00-0	6.27
----------------	------

600 Broad Street

047-1-304-00-0	0.30
----------------	------

Port Royal

037-3-200-00-0	1.30
037-3-203-00-0	0.44

Appendix E. Project Area Status

Downtown Redevelopment Areas			
Project Nodes			Progress Updates
1. Municipal Building Complex			<p>The Municipal Building Renovations and Modernization Project (\$40+ million) includes the new Linda Beazley Community Room; new elevator tower features open lobbies with windows; the addition front Telfair Street and established as a new main entrance for the building; the renovations to the existing building include a total renovation of all nine floors (approx. 125,945 sq. ft.); and the new Commission Chambers.</p> <p>The scope of the project was modified to include the new Information Technology Building and renovations to the Engineering buildings located adjacent to the Municipal Building. IT staffs moved into the new building in May 2015.</p> <p>The Augusta Commission voted to demolish the old IT Building in June 2015. Remediation took place in June-July 2015, and the actual demolition of the old structure began in July 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Congregation Children of Israel Synagogue (525 Telfair Street) – On June 2015 the Augusta Commission voted to save two historic building on the government campus. Historic Augusta and Jack Steinberg assumed maintenance and other expenses on the buildings for five years as the museum plan develops. Steinberg partnered with Historic Augusta to formulate a plan to restore both properties which will be used as Augusta Historic Jewish Museum. The project has five years to succeed or the property reverts to city control.Academy of Richmond County (540 Telfair Street) – 18,000 sq. ft. including the annex building. The building originally functioned as a school then library and museum and later sat vacant for approximately 20 years. On November 2014 the building opened doors for new education activities and learning environment. The building is presently occupied by Hack Augusta and in exchange for rent the group serves as caretaker of the building for the trustees of the Academy of Richmond County. The Municipal Building site and the Academy of Richmond County are designated as a project site in the Westobou Crossing and Higher Education District of the 2009 Master Plan.Old Medical College Building (560 Telfair Street) – 15,840 sq. ft. On October 2015 the Augusta Commission approved the decision to replace the historical marker to the Old Medical College Building. Installation date is TBD. The Municipal Building site and the Old Medical College Building are designated as a project site in the
Address	Parcel	Acres	
535 Telfair St	047-1-259-00-0	4.54	
Bldg. 3000	047-1-268-00-0	0.30	
Bldg. 4000	047-1-265-00-0	0.41	
Bldg. 5000	047-1-263-00-0	0.27	
513 Telfair St	047-1-262-00-0	0.13	
521 Telfair St	047-1-261-00-0	0.12	
525 Telfair St	047-1-260-00-0	0.23	
*510 Greene St	047-1-267-00-0	0.45	
*502 Greene St	047-1-266-00-0	0.22	
*/**540 Telfair St	047-1-297-00-0	3.75	
*/**560 Telfair St	047-1-296-00-0	0.98	
Total		11.4	
<p>Note:</p> <p>*Privately owned parcels.</p> <p>**Parcels were not originally included in the Downtown Redevelopment Areas.</p>			

Downtown Redevelopment Areas			
Project Nodes			Progress Updates
			Westobou Crossing and Higher Education District of the 2009 Master Plan.
2. 600 Broad Street			On April 2015 the building opened doors as downtown incubator. The building presently has five tenants, consists of arts groups.
Address	Parcel	Acres	
600 Broad St	047-1-304-00-0	0.30	
Total		0.30	
3. "Old Depot" Site			In 2011 the City of Augusta installed a new roof on the train depot structure to attract developments.
Address	Parcel	Acres	Previously the Watermark development (also written into the downtown Augusta-North Augusta Master Plan) fell through because the recession. The Watermark was a \$100 million plan to build a 150-room hotel, a 62,000-square-foot office building, 100 condos and a four-story parking garage, and turn the renovated Reynolds Street train depot into retail space.
511 Reynolds St	047-2-003-00-0	6.27	
Total		6.27	
4. Port Royal Site			Discovery Plaza is a 120,000 (approximate) sq. ft., two-story space located within the Port Royal building. The property is part of a mixed-use, high-rise development. The eighteen-story development is estimated to have been constructed in 1990 and consists of condominiums on the
Address	Parcel	Acres	

Downtown Redevelopment Areas			
Project Nodes			Progress Updates
1 Seventh St	037-3-200-00-0	1.30	<p>upper floors (approximately 56 units) and retail space and garage parking on the lower levels.</p> <p>Originally, the building was constructed and operated as a shopping mall. The Shoppes of Port Royal mall operated from 1991-1994 and then became a children's science exhibition center and museum, The National Science Center's Fort Discovery. In 2010, Fort Discovery closed permanently when the National Science Center relocated to Washington D.C. The space sat vacant until Unisys moved in on September 2015.</p> <p>The property is under new ownership and is undergoing repair and renovation work to improve the building space for new office and business use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 2015 Unisys signed lease contract to occupy the space and officially moved into the building on September 2015. Unisys presently occupies the space as call desk IT support. The company is expected to employ up to 700 workers by 2019. Future tenants will consist of medical building operation; restaurant operators (i.e. coffee, sandwich, and pizza shop).
	037-3-203-00-0	0.44	
Total		1.74	
5. Coliseum Complex			<p>Augusta-Richmond County Coliseum Authority requested \$15 million in the city's SPLOST 7 (under the Category Quality of Life) to help fund upgrades for aged and outdated James Brown Arena, including possible new multipurpose area with a seating capacity of approximately 9,000 for concerts, sporting events, community events, meetings, futurity, and other events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator Recommendation: \$6 million The Augusta-Richmond County Coliseum Authority commissioned AECOM Technical Services to conduct the Augusta arena study. The study recommends a new arena with 10,000 seats, 14 luxury suites, 500 club seats, and 20,000 sq. ft. of meeting or exhibition space and tenant offices. The size of the new facility is approximately 250,000 sq. ft. and expected to cost between \$90 million and \$110 million. The existing structure, the James Brown Arena is approximately 35-year-old and contains 8,500-seat. There are discussions that a new arena should remain downtown, although an exact location is undecided.
Address	Parcel	Acres	
712 Telfair St	047-1-291-00-0	1.26	
501 Seventh St	047-1-292-00-0	1.20	
601 Seventh St	047-1-300-02-0	10.16	
630 Seventh St	047-1-301-00-0	5.14	
	047-3-022-00-0	0.42	
	047-3-019-00-0	0.11	
652 Seventh St	047-3-020-00-0	0.38	
	047-3-020-01-0	0.06	
*640 Seventh St	047-3-021-00-0	0.50	
Total		19.23	

Downtown Redevelopment Areas			
Project Nodes			Progress Updates
Note: *Previously listed as 635 Twiggs St. Staff verified address with Information Technology Department and new address was assigned.			
6. Former Main Library Site			On December 2014 the City of Augusta acquired an adjacent property with street address 916 Greene Street to facilitate the repurposing of the former Augusta Library as the new headquarters and customer service office for Augusta Utilities. It appears the Augusta Public Defender's Office might occupy the space instead. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 2015 – Renovation project start (4.6 million). November 2015 – Phase 1 completion, which include removing second-floor marble panels to add windows.
Address	Parcel	Acres	
902 Greene St	047-1-194-00-0	1.12	
*909 Telfair St	047-1-192-00-0	0.06	
*425 James Brown Blvd	047-1-193-00-0	0.22	
	047-1-195-00-0	0.32	
*/**916 Greene St			
Total		1.72	
Note: *Structure(s) on property has been demolished. **Parcels were not originally included in the Downtown Redevelopment Areas.			

DRAFT